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MOODS AND TENSES.

BY ONE OF US.

The READER will easily correct the following typographical errors which have escaped notice:—

Page 14.—5th line from the bottom, change the colon after the word "mine" into a period.

19.—9th line from the top, "Adventurer's" should be "Adventurers'."

25.—4th line from the bottom, erase the mark of elision from "Jumper's."

32.—4th line from the top, supply an asterisk after "beauteous one."

52.—8th line from the top, for "bought," read "brought."

64.—near the bottom, an entire line has accidentally been omitted. Read as follows:

Old haunts! how busily doth fancy's eye,
Flashing like light along the varied scene,
Glance o'er a thousand spots, &c.

68.—2nd line from the bottom, supply a semicolon after "memory."

79.—10th line from the bottom, for "heads," read "hands."

141.—11th line from the top, for "Ci bono," read "Cui bono."

MOODS AND TENSES.

BY

ONE OF US.

The heart of man is as a cup
Supplied with mingled sweets and bitters,—
And every drop that bubbles up
Towards the brim, looks dark or glitters,
Just as his thoughts are black or bright.—

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THE contents of this volume (originating, as its name imports, chiefly in *self*) are, for the most part, of several years standing; written in occasional intervals of leisure, and then laid aside. This will account for an allusion here and there, which may appear somewhat out of date.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

(the author with his book.)

Go, little book, from this my solitude—
I cast thee on the waters.

SOUTHEY.

YES—let it go;—and though a thing
Of shreds and patches, it shall have
A name at least betokening
Some singleness of end, to brave
The fate of many a mingled lay
Whose fluttering hopes of living live
A little day,—then fly away,
Winged by the name of—Fugitive.

The rich—the poor—the court—the city,
Confess the influence of a name;
And high, and low, and dull, and witty,
All know how titles *lead* to fame:—

And though in gentle Shakspeare's mind
A rose's name might not seem vital,
Yet books we find,—much like mankind,—
Achieve distinction by a title.

Who knows not him who dwelt upon
—Hour after hour—early and late—
One thought—to give his darling son
A name that might control his fate?
How Trismegistus charmed the sire!
But Shandy's demon ruled the roast:—
Misfortune dire had stirred the fire,
And lo, with Tristram all was lost!

'Twas not that his philosophy
Indulged an idle speculation
Of nomenclature's potency
Beyond a hint for education.
He deemed a name—so sage, so long,
The best of all apologies
For (right or wrong) his vast *penchant*
To teach his boy the *ologies*

But names preparative are pregnant
With disappointment's sad mischances;—
They rarely jump well with the regnant
Wishes and thoughts as life advances:
And all the virtues of the mind,
Wrapt up in names of purity,
Fond parents find too seldom bind
Their spells around futurity.

Here a flint-hearted Charity—
And there a Patience we behold;
One making mock at misery,
The other as an arrant scold:—
And lo, where Grace—a lady's maid—
For love-sick dear Miss Di, from school,
Contrives, (the jade) when duly paid,
To make Sir Solomon a fool.

And I might quote a dozen others
Whose hopes in names have been defeated,
Of godfathers and godmothers
Out of baptismal promise cheated.

Therefore it seems more safe and wise,
In all sponsorial appellation,
Rather to prize what most defies
The perils of anticipation.

I'll tell a tale.—A parson once, Sirs,
Who smiled at names romantic styled,
At rustic christening asked the sponsors
As usual—"*Pray, who names this child?*
Hob answered—"*Oi—the neame be Joolier.*"
"*What?*"—said the priest, with bantering tone—
"*Joolier?—Joolier?—have we a fool here?*
Pooh—nonsense—I BAPTIZE THEE, JOAN!"

Now had this maid, with name uncommon,
Been doomed to rustic occupation,
Julia perhaps had spoiled the woman
With thoughts beyond her bumpkin station.
Butter and eggs, with such a name,
And poultry too, had been forsaken;—
But *Joan* became a farmer's dame,
Plain honest soul,—and saved her bacon.

Oh, Wilhelmina—Wilhelmina—
Sweet swearer "by the living jingo!"—
Thy Goldsmith ne'er had soiled so fine a
Mouth as thine own with vulgar lingo,
But for thine *other* name;—he knew
That "*gods*" must knuckle down to "*fegs*,"
When oaths out-flew from maids like you,
Cognominally known as—SKEGGS.

And Chrononhotonthologos,
With other scruples than a Jew's,
Maugre his hungry stomach's loss,
The savory slice of pork eschews.
Shall he, forgetting all his big
Illustrious nomen's dignity,
Eat *infra dig.* hunches of pig—
Pork! in a pantry too?—Not he!

Authors! apply these hints as well
To books as men,—and never call
A volume "THOUGHTS," whose pages tell
The writer never thought at all:—

Be wary also how you dun us
With "Woodland Scenes," whose rural air
Pours Chelsea Bunhouse fumes upon us,
Or, reeking, smells of Greenwich Fair.

Perhaps the prudent way 's to indite
Your pages first, then wait a little
Till after-reading brings to light
Some name that answers to a tittle.
'Tis hard, indeed, if fortune hit
No lucky passage here or there,
No happy bit—no thoughts that fit
And suit your purpose to a hair.

There are who hope by euphonies
To tickle fancy; others scratch
A curious itch for oddities
In busy idlers as they watch:—
Some like to show their muse is up
In lack-a-daisy ornament—
Some bid us "full of horrors sup"—
Some sicken us with sentiment.

Thus "Gems of Genius"—"Hop and Skip"—
"The Broken Heart"—"Parnassian Posies"—
"To-ho"—and "Fancy's Flow'rets"—strip
Aonia's shrubs of lots of roses:—
While "Ghost on Ghost"—"'Tis all my Eye"—
With "Tales of Delicate Distress"—
"The Noble Lie," and "Thinks-Me-I"—
Spring forth from sage Minerva's press.

A name for me, then!—First methought
The stuffing of a bard's portfolio
With dainty dishing might be brought
To table as "The Poet's Olio."
Pshaw!— that 's a greasy title:—well,
Will "Fruits of Leisure" find more favour?
No: though more true, it will not do
Better than t'other's kitchen flavour.

"The Vesper Offering?"—that would reach,
In three good words, as near the fact
As any periphrastic speech
Of three lines length: but then 'tis hack'd.

—Hence, sentimentals, hence! while I,
Abjuring names so novel-like,
Just put forth my own theory
Of what a name should be to strike.

A name should take with brevity—
A name should leave the mind in doubt—
A name should make the curious cry
"Why, what the deuce is he about?"—
A name should never tie one down
To any style—or grave or light—
Boring the town with smile or frown;—
No! names should be indefinite.

A name can hardly be too plain—
That is, should not be ornamental:
It should (to say what 's said again)
Be any thing but sentimental.
Names never should make over-wrought
Direct appeals to readers' senses:
And lo! a thought this moment 's caught,
To call my book—what?—"MOODS AND TENSES."

The why and wherefore folks may seek
As they read on; and if they find
That for themselves the pages speak,
'Tis well: if not,—why never mind.
I'll cry out first, and fain confess
The name is not without exception;
But, more or less, it serves to express
The rules that governed the conception.

* * * * * *

Offering—Fruits—Olio, then, are fled,
With other nothings of a name,
And Moods and Tenses in their stead
Must make or miss the way to fame.
Nor let my prelude's levity
The reader's graver sense offend;—
The book will be from lightness free,
Full often ere we reach the end.

The heart of man is as a cup
Supplied with mingled sweets and bitters—
And every drop that bubbles up
Towards the brim looks dark or glitters

Just as our thoughts are black or bright.
Ah, quench not then, with ill-timed jeer,
A gleam of light in sorrow's night,
—The smile that haply dries a tear.

THE APOLOGY.

IN A FAMILIAR EPISTLE TO ————.

Dear Friend, though letters pass between us often
Which by their heartiness contrive to soften
The pains of absence—yet as they are chiefly
On various topics, which one touches briefly
Lest any thing of all one has to tell
(Such as that folks *chez nous* are pretty well—
That thus the world is wagging, and all that
Which comes within the limits of kind chat)
Should be omitted, and so leave a blank
Of subjects that must hold the highest rank
In the heart's tender yearnings;—it falls out
That sundry matters which we are about,
Though with no wish or thought of reservation,
Stand little or no chance of full relation.

Now, as you know some wastings of my time
Are answerable for the sin of rhyme,
And kindly share whatever may concern
Me as your friend, 'tis right that you should learn,
In somewhat more than in a general way,
What shape my thoughts and wishes take to-day—
(Perhaps 'twere more correct to say *to-night*,
Since rarely else, and then by fits, I write.)
—Well, then, what think you?—I 'm about to print
Some little things of mine.—I know you 'll hint
At other thoughts and higher expectations
From my long since acknowledged occupations.
"When last we met," you 'll say, "no *little* thing
Had taught your muse to prune her soaring wing;
But nobler inspirations then had fired
Your mind and heart, which ardently aspired
For something greater—something that might give
It's author all an Epic's hope to live.
Has then your muse been sleeping since, or is it
That she has fail'd to pay your pen a visit?
How comes it that her lofty eagle-flight
Can stoop to little things, and thus alight
Down from her towering, bold, sun-gazing height?"

Thus may you question with that friendly tone,
Speaking my credit dear as is your own ;—
And not less tuned to friendship's harmony
Might you, if near me, catch my tongue's reply :—
But now, since distant means can be no better,
My words must take their shape, and be a letter,
Which, while it chiefly tells by what obstruction
My muse foregoes her more severe production,
Will show how love of print, which nothing stifles,
Like mine, takes refuge in a heap of trifles.

Aonian billets (as I 've said before,
About two dozen lines behind, or more)—
Aonian billets-doux I seldom write,
Save in the witching, silent hours of night ;
For while the glorious sun rides in the sky,
I 've other—larger—fish, you know, to fry ;
But when those hours that wearied hearts love best
" Throw their dark mantle o'er"—(you know the rest)—
I " take my rouse," and may at times be caught
Indulging in that art which one is taught
Next to one's A B C—out-pouring from
My pen's unconscious nib such thoughts as come—

Some sober and sedate, and some more gay,
According to my mood :—(the latter may
Haply at times drive bitterer thoughts away.)
Yet many a tempting hour, when one would rather
The simplest flow'ret of Parnassus gather,
Than swill the quintessence of such delights
As tyrant Fashion makes her own o' nights,
The sundry calls of what we misname Pleasure
Will still be interrupting sweeter leisure.—
Sometimes, nay often, for a long long week
Together, one 's forbade so much as speak
A single word to any friendly muse :
—Invited here to-day—to-morrow there,
Where it perhaps might look particular,
Or, what is worse, be crabbed, to refuse ;
Nights roll away—away—and leave no sign
That they have been.—'Tis often so with mine :—
—I speak not now of that Society,
To none more pleasant than it is to me,
Where hearty fellowship and happy ease
With frank and friendly talk conspire to please,

In which the mind, quitting its lonely mood,
Rubs off the rust that grows on solitude.
No; never let me dub, in prose or rhyme,
Life's friendly intercourse a waste of time:
Though even *this*, when added to the mass
Of heartless visitings, becomes, alas!
(Friendship's Penates, pardon me!)—*a bore:*
For, when a tasteless cup's brimful before,
One added drop, though sweet, will make that cup
run o'er.

Still with the stream one goes, leaving the ample
Sources of self-enjoyment just to be
Parts of the world we live in. For example:
Suppose I give a night—or two—or three—
As from a journal kept some weeks ago
For wholesome after-reference, and to show
To you, my friend, who kindly wish to know,
How my desires to court a nobler muse
Were thwarted nightly. I leave *you* to choose
Which of the sundry sorts of obstacles
Were pleasant, and which not;—my Journal tells

Only that "such things were" (and are!) the reins
By which life's varied intercourse restrains
A hand, which else, in silent hours, like mine,
Might lay some offerings to the tuneful Nine,
Upon a loftier altar in their shrine.
—Now "gather and surmise," while I rehearse
Some scenes (I've turn'd my Journal into verse)
Which *you* may relish not the less for giving
Some of my goings-on and ways of living.

* * * * * *

Last night, the sixth—at which a present chance
Of leisure serves me for a Parthian glance—
Last night was at a lady's where I spend,
At tea and small-talk well-nigh without end,
My early evenings sometimes with a friend.
—She's one who'll manage cleverly to bring
A bit of *something* about *every thing:*
A chronicle she is of Magazines,
And, for ought I know, known behind their scenes;
For by some sign, to her infallible,
Month after month, and year by year, she'll tell

Who writes in this—who edites that Review—
Calls Mr. Campbell *Tom*—and thinks 'twas too—
Too bad the spiteful Quarterly should choose
To heap my Lady Morgan with abuse :—
She thinks she 's fully up to all *their* tricks,
Who cry down worth because of politics.
—In early life she wrote a so-so book,
And scorns to marvel that it never *took*—
Giving this reason why it did not sell,
" 'Twas caviare, Sir, to the general."
—She travelled once, and held it right to keep
An *Album*, into which she 'll often peep ;
And when her memory has done its part,
To get a sentiment or so by heart,
Of Naples, Milan, Florence, or the Pope,
She 'll venture to express her ardent hope
—I don't remember what—but something witty :—
Then peeps again ; and vows 'tis monstrous pretty
That Byron names Venice—that watery city—
Rome of the ocean !—yet, she 's vastly sorry
His lordship was so naughty as to worry

The world with his Don Juan;—then, again,
Why *did* he ever write that thing called *Cain?*
She prides herself that once—'twas at a ball,—
She got some side-wind notice from De Stael—
There she saw Talma too,—made "mems" of what
He said on that occasion;—it was not
Much that he spoke indeed,—but then, you know,
'Twas he himself who said—*Oh, qu'il fait chaud!*
—She loves old Goethe's Faust—ay, to her heart—
And can't conceive, not she, for her poor part,
How Retsch's outlines should be NOT admired,
(Knowing the go 's to praise 'em 'till one 's tired)
By Gall and Spurzheim too she's half inspired.
She ventures, now and then, a word of Sappho,
Is quite at home with Hudibras and Ralpho;
She prates of Pindar (Peter ?), and she 'll soar
At times, to old Anacreon (by Moore);
She knows as much as most about Ravanti;
Loves Petrarch—Ariosto—Tasso—Dante—
(Englished, you know, by Dobson, Hoole, and Cary;)
She sometimes quotes the Edda,—but she 's wary

In what she says of Ross's crimson snow;
And deems it rather prudent not to go
Beyond her depth, when M—— thinks fit to be
Lost in the problem of the Polar sea;
Though not a little given to take her flights
To icy mountains, and the Northern lights.
She wishes Parry back, and almost hates
To think upon those horrid Behring's straits—
Trusts the Adventurer's meat and also coal
Will last,—and hopes (prodigious!) from her soul
The voyagers may soon return, to prove
The sweets of home again—the joys of love.*
Mistress she is of *this*, and eke of *that*—
The very oracle of chit and chat;
Nor quite unskilled in hoar antiquity,
(Herself, though single, rising sixty-three);
She holds it profanation not to admire
Poets and poetry; and she 'll aspire
In sounding prose, at times, to string together
Johnsonian periods—all about the weather.

* Written during Captain Parry's first voyage.

She's up in Rubens, Raphael, Cuyp, Vandyke,
Books, Phidias, gas, steam-engines, and the like;
She talks of Eastlake's Bandits, (who does not?)
Of Hayter's glowing tints, and Walter Scott;
Prints are to her "a passion," and the sight
Of coins and relics is "an appetite."
A sort of critic, too; and folks *do* say
She sent a notice on the last new play,
To the Old Monthly—but it was not printed!
Indeed, by her 'tis somewhat more than hinted,
That taking umbrage at the indignity
Which could reject a *lady's* offering, she
Had told the sage conductor, when he met her a
Week afterwards,—et cetera, et cetera.

Ye skin-deep learned dames, here I restrain
Myself within due bounds, and pull the rein.
'Tis only puffed-up pompousness refuses
To relish what, to say the least, amuses,
Holding it *infra dig.* to say a word
Except on weighty matters. 'Tis absurd.

Small-talk is like small coin, (the thought 's not new,
Nathless, my friend, it may be so to you.)
It is a sort of social currency;
And he who holds his learned head too high,
To think of buying pennyworths of fun,
And take his share in trifles, is like one
Who, though a Henry Hase of fifty pound
Burns in his breeches pocket, yet is found
Poor for most purposes within the range
Of daily life—because he wants small change.
I deem it misery to have one's eyes
And ears, and taste, so very, very nice,
That one and all, taste, ears, and eyes, must weigh
And scan, before we condescend to pay
The compliment of being pleased with what
Passes before us:—every thing cannot
Be best, you know; but every thing may be
Useful as samples of variety.
My lady-friend, for instance, (to my mind
A specimen quite perfect of its kind)
Is knowing, complaisant, and pleasant too--
In short--why mince the matter?—she 's a *blue*.

Still, if your present turn be for some graver
Orgies of learning, let me ask your favour
To follow me where haply you 'll be placed
Mid spirits more congenial with your taste.
After the social joys of tea and toast,
And gossip of last ev'ning, I could boast
Of higher game :—the rooms of a sage crony
Were open for a Conversazione,
And sterling *science* being the order there,
The rule of *wisdom* was to exclude the Fair.
A Conversation then's a place where men go
To talk ?—Oh, no ; *lucus a non lucendo.*
The dons, when we arrived, (methought t' enhance
What was to come) were sitting all mum-chance—
They hadn't, Sir, a word to throw a dog,
And, what was worse, had little or no prog
For creature-comfort ; nothing could I see
To oil the rusty mind's machinery,
But half a dozen straggling cups of tea—
A sloppy, cold libation of bohea !
Ah ! what is tea to those who know, as we know,
The buoyant properties of Maraschino

To weigh up wit again when quite aground:
But here, perhaps, 'twas only *too* profound
To float upon the surface; or the whole
Notion just then about a "flow of soul"
Lay in a very rigid tongue-control.
Well, after turning over a few prints,
And waiting patiently to catch some hints
Of mental potency, but finding none,—
I thought it quite as well to cut and run
Off to my lodgings, where my inclination
Not rendering me agog to take my station
Among the expectant Muses, I thought best
To say my prayers—take candle,—and to rest,—
But with a firm resolve that the next night
(This very one) I would proceed to indite
A trifle of my epic, unless fate
Should make "an evening party" end too late,
To which a card (that creature of futurity,
Reaching to-day its five weeks' full maturity,
Charged with the talismanic words "*At home*
Thursday the seventh") invites me now to come.

And so, though half it puts me in the dumps,
I *must* whip on my pantaloons and pumps—
See who is who in Bruton-street, and then
Hie home again to re-assume my pen,
Either to get on further in life's story,
Or take a goose-quill flight at higher glory.
The clock now strikes eleven—'tis just the time;
Here goes till twelve—and then return to rhyme.

* * * * *

The moment 's come; but not, alas! for me,
Pregnant with heart-expanding poesy—
(And, sooth to say, 'tis nearer four than three)
I 'm at my post, 'tis true, but tired and jaded,
The brightest flow'rets of Parnassus faded;
My mind, such as it is, all in a maze,
A buzz, a hubbub, full of this and that—
Elopements—how d'ye do's—new dresses—plays—
Your La'ship can't be serious!--dear me!—what?
Macready—charming weather—bless us!—no!
Oh law!—pray what 's the news?—I hope you'll go—
Next Wednesday—'tis her benefit, you know—

Now, really, now—but who *is* that young thing?
She's just come out—(a glass of ice?) knock—ring—
More company—delightful!—what a crowd!—
Your Lordship's very good—I'm vastly proud—
Ha, I declare, my dear—there's Mrs. Racket—
How do?—how do?—and charming Lady Clacket—
Heavens!—what a tongue she has?—and only see,
Here are the Grangers come—there's O—there's P.
Belzoni, too, and pretty Mrs. D.
How stout she gets—(a jelly, ma'am?)—Sir John,
Pray who is that queer friend of your's? (some cake?)
Don't go—'tis early yet—but won't you take
Refreshments?—No.—Good night!—I'm glad *they're* gone
The fogrums!—Well! the room at length is thinning—
The evening's snuggest moment just beginning;
Perhaps the *young* folks now may stand a chance—
Can't we knock up, d'ye think, a little dance?
(Miss Jumper's coming up!) oh, well, I vow
They'll help us out!—just come in time—now—now—
Sir George—my daughter Kate—come, one quadrille—
The Lancers—Julia, love, I'm sure *you* will—

No, not to-night, I thank you.—Poz? now *do;*
Come now, you *must*—why 'tis but half-past two!—
I 'll do as much next Friday week for you.
What, you *will* go then—well—well—never mind,
I 'll pay you off for this—'tis *so* unkind!—
Nay, if you *will*, good night; but you had best
Not see my face again this week at least,
You cruel creature you! But 'tis your marriage
Has made you grave, poor thing!—The Delmours'
carriage!
My cloak!—Miss Tibbs's servant!—rattle—rattle—
The street 's alive with clattering wheels and cattle.
Good night!—Doors closed,—the lady of the house,
('Twas whispered by a confidential mouse)
Turning lack-lustre eyes upon her spouse,
Exclaims—" Folks stay so long! they never know
How very kind I think it when they go:
I really *am* quite tired out—Sir John
A'n't you rejoiced to be once more alone?
Look, if it isn't three o'clock and past;
These things will be the death of me at last.

Dear me, I don't know when I *shall* recover.
Stanford, put out the lights—thank Heaven, *that's*
over!"

Such are the joys of Lady Squeezem's rout.
It can't be helped, you know—one must "go out:"
And though these fashions are the very deuce
For those who relish not, but can't refuse
To make a unit, where a motley crowd
Magnify nothingness by talking loud,
P'rhaps 'tis a cheap escape from sundry jokes
For being queer and unlike other folks:
Yes, if one *lives* at all, thus it must be,
Just for the form's sake of society.
Nay, to speak truth, spite of the various scandals,
The clack, the clatter, rumpus, lamps and candles,
With which folks wipe their debts out once a year,
There are some gleams of sunshine even here.

For instance, had I, to escape this crowd,
Taken a step that is at least allowed,

And, among those who 're "grieved they couldn't come,"
(Because, perhaps, they chose to stay at home)
Sent my apology to be displayed
Like theirs on marble tables, where they're laid
In heaps, to hint that though the rooms are crammed,
There are some dozens yet who might have jammed
Their bodies also; (which *ensemble* shows
What lots of folks the lady hostess knows:)
Oh! I had missed the sight of such a creature,
So sweet, so every-thing in form and feature!
By Jove! I 'd pass another such a night,
Yea, twenty, forty like it, so I might
Enjoy one repetition of that sight.
For such another glance as that I 'd try
My luck at routs for half a century.
Such looks from such bright eyes I never knew!
But then, with thee, sweet saint! I 've nought to do,
Since in the squeeze was one, who by my guess
Had a heart's right in thy dear happiness:
And so, farewell!

Thus then you see, my friend,
I 'm baulked once more in striving for the end
So long in view.—Well, let my poem sleep
Snug in my desk another night—'twill keep.
Though in this chitty-chatty mood one may
Scribble, when half awake—away—away,
One 's all unfit, at more than half-past three,
To court severer Muses—or to be
Intent on weighty subjects, such as mine;
Nor does my mind to aught but bed incline,
Unless, indeed, (and I 'm half bent upon it)
To greet that lovely creature with a sonnet.
Shall I begin, " BEAUTIFUL BEING !"—no;
I won't commence my sonnet so—but so:

SONNET.

Once, once again, in the omnipotence
Of thy most gentle, all-unconscious power,
Oh bless my waking eyes! or in that hour
When slumber lightly seals mine outward sense,

Steal on me with thy quiet influence,
Silent and beautiful,—and be, or seem,
The sweetest being of the sweetest dream
That Truth's and Fancy's mingled effluence
E'er thrilled the heart withal!—I saw thee there,
Most like the creature of some higher sphere
Stepped from her star.—But ah, that fragile grace,
And the blanched hue of that most delicate face
Bespeak thou art no less her mortal guest
Than of Earth's lovely daughters' loveliest!

. . . . . .

This stinted child of Poesy confines
Itself so strictly in its rhymes and lines,
That search where'er I might, I never knew
Of all the great in sonnet-craft, but few
(Though I rank most of them among my betters)
Who did not seem to put the Muse in fetters.
Yet I like sonnets, and oftimes offend
That way myself,—but chiefly to this end,
Because I think their strictness may be found
Good poet-practice. 'Tis a sort of school
To keep too lax a style within some bound,
And tie a rambler, like myself, to rule.

Thus much for sonnets, then : and now I go
To sleep—perchance to *dream*—so *bon repos*.

. . . . . .

The 8th.—More promising—but passed—in what?
Mem. Several pleasant friends came in to chat—
Foes to the silent Muse ; but what of that?
I like the fellows well, and they like me.
—Oysters and punch, in strict sobriety,
And liberal talk *chez moi* till half past three.

. . . . . .

The next night, Saturday, the Muse is cheated
By her own sisters, where the sense is treated
With harmony, as Ronzi's vivid song
In thrilling utterance pours its tide along,
And sweet expression with a milder glory
Lives on the lips of gentle Caradori.
Where, too, the other Ronzi, who may be
Herself, for aught I know, Terpsichore—
Though with a form less airy than beseems
The dancing goddess of Canova's dreams—

Gives every attitude a graceful sense,
And to each varied movement eloquence,
Till we almost forget to dwell upon
The loss of one—the sylph-like beauteous one—
Whose fairy-loved Cendrillon at the ball
Made every falling footstep musical.

. . . . . .

The 10th, called *dies non*—but who knows why
Except the hungry men of law?—not I.
The day's a day that fitlier with it brings
Thoughts upon higher far and holier things
Than all the sounding elegance of rhyme:
A day that bids us take account of time—
A day, indeed, that never should pass by
Without deep musings on eternity.
And though perchance (for Sunday can't exempt us
From worldly thoughts) the itch of verse may tempt us
To fix some image that bears brightness in it,
Rather than lose "the Cynthia of the minute;"

* Mademoiselle Mercandotti, now Mrs. Hughes Ball, whose dancing was the very melody of motion.

Yet when the heart's not blunted to the zest
Of heaven's own goodness in its day of rest,
More solemn sentiment the mind pervades
Than " dreams of Pindus and th' Aonian maids."

. . . . . .

The next three nights, spent in agreeable
And cheerful visits that I like full well;
Which being one and all of the same caste,
The first and second friendly as the last,
My journal merely offers a reflection
As to what qualities confer perfection
On such affairs of sociable refection.—
Of all the feasts at which I ever bait,
Commend me to that snuggest number *eight*
For pleasant dinners, where one 's sure to meet
With general conversation as a treat,
With no restraint at all save *politesse*,
No knuckling down to pride—nor haughtiness
Beyond propriety—where nought that 's said
Or drank sends one disquieted to bed:
In all things nor too little nor too much—
Thanks be, of dinners I get sundry such,

And some of them just now.—In short, each day,
Till Monday 's past, (and that night to the play
With my young friends from * * street) I 'm hired
Beyond the chance of being muse-inspired:
For though from such like hospitalities,
However late the congress, one can rise
Before the usual hour of scribbling 's come,
(That is, with me) and get snug in at home;
Still there 's that something in a set-out dinner
Makes ev'n the moderate feel they don't "grow thinner"—
And, as the poet sings, your dainty bits
Fatten the ribs, but bankrupt out the wits;
Besides, of all libations to the Nine,
Few things propitiate less than heavy wine.

. . . . . .

My journal here is void—unused my pen
Till the aforesaid Monday next—and then—
Dined at my friend's, and after went to see,
Ev'n as I said, with pretty A— and E—
The Irish poet's woeful Tragedy.—

One of the lasses with an eye of mirth,
And lips where smiles are aye at constant birth,
Laughed out her funny notions of the play—
(You know the *riante* creature's chirping way)
She thought it high-flown stuff:—her milder sister
Drank in the sorrows of the heroine
With such a gentle grief—I could have kissed her
Sweet tears away—they almost summoned mine.
Methought it was the prettiest criticism
I yet had seen: and though the witticism
Of her blithe sister was perchance more true,
I liked the gentler better—pray don't you?

* * * * * *

Such are, however you may sagely rate them,
The facts which all are mainly as I state them,
With only, here and there, a sort of wise
Wrapping of names up somewhat in disguise;—
Such are the various lets which make old Time
(Else dedicated to the birth of rhyme)
A winged and busy nothing:—then, with these,
Number in sundry other hindrances—

Trips out of town on business or for pleasure,
All breaking in on quiet evening leisure—
Besides some vagrant fancies of my own,
Some whims of wandering, that almost atone
For wasted moments:—and to these, I ween,
You 'll hardly fail to add one more,—I mean
That which has oftentimes drawn smiles from you,—
The aptness of that lump of Amadou
Ycleped a heart, that in my bosom lies,
To be the tindery victim of young eyes
From being's day of spring ev'n to that age
When the world's warier ones indulge more sage
Heart-worshippings than those eye-sparks of light
Which only *seem* to make existence bright,
Until such meteor glances all are banished,
And all their flickering beams away have vanished
Before the steadier glow of one, last, best,
Pure, all-in-all absorbing interest;—
That genial, soul-inspiring, lasting flame
Which being love's own essence—not its name—
Annihilates the trivial past for ever,
And, unlike former visions, endeth—never!

—And you, my friend, no more the easy-hearted
Receiver of young smiles, as when we parted,
I think upon, not now as though your heart
Had found love's joys alone without the smart—
But as of one star-doomed to dwell and dwell
On fixed affections baffled :—you know well
The anxious feeling—ah, by woe concealed,
The dearest bosomed-thought kept unrevealed—
The one sweet sentiment of life confined
To rest a silent trust within the mind—
The hopes that looked to far-off future years
Checked by the birth of unimparted fears,
Fears hushed while honor's impulses restrain
The tongue, lest fate or fortune render vain
The longings of the heart, and to despair
Doom the fond breast which fain would garner there,
" Like one intire and perfect chrysolite,"
Her whose mild radiance shedding inward light
Might make the casket which enshrined it bright.—
You know how such perplexities ensnare
Time,—thoughts—and every thing—all that we are
Into themselves.—Of these I 've had my share,

But though, like you prophetic of Despair, I
Perchance, with far *more* cause, have been *less* wary.—
Thus then, with all such lets and hindrances,
Mingling annoyance with some things that please,
You will not wonder why a thwarted wight,
Who finds small scribbling-time except at night,—
Rather than smother his dear love of print,
Steals from his favourite Terence this good hint—
That still UT QUIMUS may be kept snug by us
Quando UT VOLUMUS the fates deny us;—
And, baulked from cultivating higher arts,
Puts forth some trifles born by fits and starts.—
Let the world like or loathe, I know that you
Will give them some regard—and so, adieu!—
But, hold—these jingling lines of mine obtained
A title which I fain would see sustained—
And though not written at a single sitting,
Yet being an "Epistle," it seems fitting
To end in letter fashion.—"What!" you cry,
"Letter indeed? why 'tis a history."
'Tis so:—well—be revenged; put out your strength
And punish me with one of equal length;

All about what you do, and this, and that—
Be *even* with me—say—there 's tit for tat : —
Let it surpass all privilege of franks—
I 'll pay the postage heartily, with thanks.
Write then, and make " assurance double sure,"—
Take full revenge—" pour on, I will endure."—
But 'tis high time to finish. My dear fellow,—
In every humour, whether grave or mellow,
Whether I write plain prose, or my muse pours
Her thoughts in rhyme—though miles on miles may sever
Us each from other—still believe me ever
Most truly and unalterably—Yours.

RETROSPECTION,

OR

NATALE SOLUM.

Movemur enim, nescio quo pacto, locis ipsis in quibus eorum quos diligimus aut admiramur adsunt vestigia.

CICERO.

Les plus simples usages, comme les relations les plus intimes; les interêts les plus graves, comme les moindres plaisirs,—tout étoit de la patrie,—tout n'en est plus. On ne rencontre personne qui puisse vous parler d'autre-fois,—personne qui vous atteste l'identité des jours passés avec les jours actuels;—la destinée recommence sans que la confiance des premières années se renouvelle;—l'on change de monde sans avoir changé de cœur.—*Mad. de Stael on crossing the Rhine.*

What now I sing is but to passe away
A vacant houre as some musitians play;
Or make another my owne griefes bemone,
Or to be least alone when most alone.
In this can I—though not whene'er I chuse—
Hug sweet content by my retyred muse—
And in a study find as much to please
As others in the greatest palaces.—
Each man that lives, according to his powre,
On what he loves bestowes an idle houre:
Instead of hounds that make the wooded hils
Talke in a hundred voyces to the rils,
I like the pleasing cadence of a line
Strucke by the concert of the sacred Nine.
Such, of the Muses, are the able powres,
That since with them I spent my vacant houres,
I find nor hawke, nor hound, nor other thing,
Turnyes nor revels (pleasures for a king)
Yeeld more delight.

BROWNE'S BRITANNIA'S PASTORALS,
(with a slight alteration.)

ADVERTISEMENT.

Several of the following stanzas, though of the prescribed sonnet dimension, will be found heretical in the recurrence of their rhymes. That they are thus sent forth "wanting in fair proportion" lies somewhere between indolence and purpose. Of the remainder indeed not many will be found of that absolutely legitimate structure which consists in fitting the first eight lines to the quadruple iteration of two rhymes. While, however, the shackled monotony of the true sonnet is in general avoided by allowing the sixth and seventh lines to chime together in a new rhyme, instead of echoing the second and third;—the admission of some few with a more regular construction serves for further variety.

Retrospection has grown to its present form out of short intervals of leisure—a sonnet or two now and then having been an agreeable evening recreation after

weightier day engagements.—A sort of fanciful fondness for the omens of numerical coincidences first led the author to commemorate his birth-place in three sonnets, conveying thereby a sly insinuation of the Graces;—a step beyond them made him cast his thoughts on that most portentous of numbers, *seven, rerum omnium fere nodus;*—an eighth, however, brought him so near the Muses, that he must fain try his luck with the auspicious Nine; but these fascinating creatures carrying him beyond himself, the nearest point then to hit was the months of the year;—still the scribbling cacoëthes at the finish of his twelfth made him aspire at the lunar months;—one more brought him to a galaxy of sonnets in the square of their own completed number;—but this being passed through, no resting place appeared short of the years of his own age—and lo—when he topped those, the fit being on him still, nothing could serve his turn (the days in each month not being defined enough) but a long leap from some twenty-odd, to the weeks of the year:—this jump fortunately brought him to a handsome close at the end of his fifty-second. Another

step might have put him on a journey towards his grand climacteric—dangerous ground! for that once passed, he must needs have gone on till the close of the century.

So much for the progress:—the origin of his poem may best be described in the words quoted before his opening stanza, from a living poet who has himself shewn,—in his River Duddon,—that a series of sonnets might form a graceful poem.—There too the author finds authority and example (not wanting elsewhere) for his frequent preference of giving three rhymes to the first division of a sonnet.

RETROSPECTION.

Yes—they can make who fail to find
Short leisure ev'n in busiest days;—
Moments to cast a look behind,
And profit by the kindly rays
Which through the clouds do sometimes steal
And all the far-off Past reveal.

WORDSWORTH.

I.

PLACE of my birth;—and I will add thy name
Albeit less musical than may be heard
Echoing its sweetness on the Muses' hill;
For thou art known old PLYMOUTH—and shalt still
Tell thine own story in the deathless fame
Of many thy sons whose names shall live revered
For genius, valor's high emprize, and worth
When nobler nothings moulder in the earth:—
Place of my birth—where'er life's path has led
Thy wandering child, still has his swelling heart
Throbbed, when amid the loud world's bustling tread
Thy name has met his ear—and, with a start,
Visions sprung up of deeds that cannot die
Bearing the freshness of eternity.

II.

With what a fairy spell doth Memory
Call up the Past to throng the present hour,
Wielding her wand of more than wizard power
O'er beings of fore-gone reality—
Till all that was, in life's variety,
Bright days and dark—forgotten griefs and gladness—
Tales of old time, and joys long-past, and sadness—
Obeying her all-viewless potency,
Join in strange chorus! The enchantress breathes
Her incantations in a Thought—that wreathes
Itself a garland from the varied flowers
Of years and years revived—while on, she scours
Up, up—uncheck'd—untired—to times far gone
With speed for which an instant's thousandth were too long.

III.

The spell is on me now:—lo, she appears
Peopling the regions of my native shore
With forms which ne'er might meet, save thus, before;—
And in mine eyes—eyes dim, alas! with tears,—
The lost companions of my happier years
Stand as they lived;—whilst Virtue in her glass
Shows the unsullying figures as they pass—
Like Banquo smiles, and points at them for hers!

And many a spirit mingles in the throng
Of many another age—spirits whose fame
Gleaming in glory, whilst their very name
Pours music, might light up the darkest song,
Till forth it shone in borrowed brilliancy
Sparkling with rays of immortality.

IV.

But more to thoughts—to scenes, these strains belong
Than men.—Away! lest truth begin to prate
Of some who wore love's guise to cloke their hate—
Of knaves half hid in revelry and song—
And yellow wretches, with their god of gold,
Who many a dear remembered-one among
Might point some tale far better left untold.
Oh! these self-worshippers would mar the throng
Of noble souls—these things of dullest leaven—
Creatures of earth, without a spark of heaven,
Would soil the fond, the backward-reaching thought
Of what is pure, and bootless troubles raise,
Were the mild Muse to such a labour brought
As winnowing musty chaff from wheat of other days.

. . . . . .

V.

Hail narrow streets—haunts of mine innocent days!
I almost like your dinginess: in sooth,
There 's not a nook or alley but doth raise
Some pleasing, fond remembrance of my youth;—
Yea, ev'n yon lumpish Guildhall's lack of grace,*
That was the laugh of my uprising years,
Is now a thing of memory—and to me,
Seen through the long, long distance, it appears
Wrought from its shapelessness to symmetry.—
Let who will smile—I care not; for my part,
Linked with a thought of cherished infancy,
The crooked'st lane leads straight into my heart;—
Albeit, old Town of mine, no love can screen
That ugliest truth of all—thou art not *over* clean!

VI.

But who may sing the glories of thy fields,
Where rich luxuriance smiles on all around,
And, proud of blessings that boon nature yields,
Frank souls, and liberal open hearts abound—
Where labour's children, the brown sons of toil,
Air-free and guileless on all sides we meet
Bearing fresh witness of a healthful soil.—
Thrice happy race!—ah, lovely scenes!—ye greet

* See Note 1, at the end of the Poem.

This heart with things remembered, which have been
Most ministrant to its quick pulse of joy,
When light, and wild, and blithe—a heedless boy—
Ranging your valleys, meads, and uplands green,
I plucked and threw away life's fairest flowers,
Thoughtless—or making light—of future darker hours.

VII.

The Past seems Present amid thoughts like these;
And though fond lingerings among early days,
And boyish feelings, gather meagre praise
In hearts of sterner stuff,—nor e'er may please
Sir Stoic Affectation's apathies,
No matter—still I cherish (ah! in vain)
The wish to be a very boy again;*
Hugging the thousand kindly sympathies
Which mingle with my being, when the mind
Strays back to pleasure's pains which lie behind;
And if some day, ere childhood comes again
With creeping age, I hold life's haughtier things
Other than pride's loud, hollow blusterings,
I too, perchance, may learn to scorn this humbler strain.

* Note 2.

VIII.

But as it is with me,—ah! why should thought
Be checked from beckoning back the days long-lost,
In whose remembered influence I almost
Am that again which ne'er hath been forgot?
The hand of time hath changed me—and for what?
For wisdom?—No; that rightly understood
Is but to know and choose the path to good;
Experience then?—experience sure hath bought
Some gain with years? Yes; just enough to chill
The heart with one cold truth,—that happiness
Is but a dream of hope.—Then better far
To deck bright fancy in the lovely dress
She wore in spring-time, than too deeply feel
The blank reality of what we are.

IX.

The NINTH! methinks that word sounds tunefully!
This stanza *shall* be yours, harmonious Nine!
And though an humble votary at your shrine
Now dips his nutshell cup in Castaly,
Breathe on him, thrill his heart to harmony,
And dub him Musagetes in your throng,
That your sweet names, filling his early song,
May meet and mingle into minstrelsy:—

Nor then desert him; but bid every thought
That dwells upon your loveliness be fraught
With fresh Aonian treasures, unsurpassed—
That first or ninth, his thousandth and his last,
May one and all be yours!—How say we then?
—By Jove! I'll try my luck with stanza ten.*

X.

Hush! is it heavenly music breathes around?—
They come.—First, blithe Thalia, hail;—and see,
Sweet Polyhymnia—wise Calliope—
Clio—and bright Urania, starry-crowned—
Young Erato—and she of trip and bound,
The brisk, the light-of-heart Terpsichore—
With solemn-robed, divine Melpomene,—
All gather, gather to the varied sound
Of soft Euterpe's pipe. And though the lyre
Of him whose heart the very names inspire,
Be of an earthly strain,—ah! how might he
Forego the thoughts of such sweet minstrelsy?
To sing the Muses' number how refuse,
Albeit he haply miss the numbers of the Muse?†

. . . . .

* † Notes 3 and 4.

XI.

In sooth, mine ancient Town, I love thee so,
That though unskilled Petrarca's verse to raise,
I fain would build some sonnets in thy praise,
And strive to clear my heart before I go
To higher themes—but far less dear to me
Than this, wherein the glass of Memory
Reflects the cloudless scenes of other days
That may return in heaven, but can no more below:—
For though the self-same fields may yet be green—
Though friends still crowd to greet the welcome guest—
Though every well-known haunt and favourite scene
Be yet unchanged;—Truth makes a heavy moan,
For ah, the sunshine of the stainless breast *
Which gave young happiness its loveliest charm,—is gone.

XII.

Yet 'tis a pleasant sorrow, when we seem
In Thought's fond flattery, to live over such
Young joyous hours; and with the mind's touch
To grasp, albeit but in a waking dream,
Youth's freshest flowers again—to feel the beam
Of our fair summer warm the heart once more—
To give ourselves to fancy, and explore
With charmed sense the source of life's smooth stream;

* Note 5.

And thence, with innocent looks of the soul's lightness,
Our thoughts unwarped, and nought around but brightness—
To sail down softly with that favouring tide.
—Oh, 'twere pure pleasure thus on—on—to glide
Through old delights—but for a dreary voice
Which whispers still through all—"These are *departed* joys."

XIII.

And thus, old scenes, in thought I visit ye!—
—How may we choose but dwell again—again—
On that most fine and beautiful moment, when
Chasing perchance the rainbow playfully,
Or wandering wild, or watching the loud sea
In idle terror at the tempest-din,—
A flash of thought first prompts a voice within
To ask in wonder—*How can these things be?*
—Oh, what a moment!—when the young heart seeming
To shake off the dim shadows of past dreaming,
Wakes with the dawn of truth, in whose bright ray
The halcyons that had brooded o'er our day,
Lulling its waves, rustle at length their wings
And rouse the soul to seek the harmonies of things.

XIV.

O, then all nature teems with eloquence.*
Woods, waters, clouds, earth, sky, the flowers impart
Harmonious lessons to the new-strung heart;—
Mountains have language, waves an influence,
Speaking to this fresh-born intelligence;—
The winds grow musical, and every stream
Babbles a meaning;—yea, ev'n thunders seem,
Though voicelike, not a terror to that sense,
Which, feeling God in all things, at that hour
Finds stars begin to write His name of power;
And in the noontide brightness of its blaze,
This earth's great light-spring, the effulgent sun
Shrink to a spark amid the million rays
Which hint the glory of the Mightiest One.

XV.

But this is past.—Too soon the tale was done
Of those bright hours of youth, when wonder's hue
Made every thing look beautiful, and threw
A light from heaven around.—No more the sun
Shines to the unsoiled heart—the time is gone
When pleasant spring, and summer's sultry hour,
And autumn's fruitage,—yea, the storms which lower
O'er bleak December—each and every one

* Note 6.

Brought its own unstained joys.—Yes, farewell all
Those days when every sound was musical—
Your feelings fled—ah, ne'er unmixed with pain
To thrill along the fine-tuned soul again—
What time my barque of life its sails unfurled
And launched into the troubled ocean of the world.

* * * * * *

XVI.

We deem not him true child of happiness
Whose gold still multiplies each charm of sense,
Whom every gaud of lordliest eminence
And all earth's sumptuous pleasures seem to bless—
He may have all things largely to possess,
Shine the world's idol, and his own,—yet be
Poorer than poor, unblest as penury:
For life's most gorgeous gifts prove valueless,
Our pomps but empty shows, our gains mere loss,
And all the pride of glittering treasures—dross,
Till, through the adept heart's bland alchemy,
They catch new brightness from the ministry
Of goodly use—and shine forth all refined,
The pure, sublimed, unfading riches of the mind.

XVII.

Smile—scorn the Muses' plain morality,*
And cry "'Tis trite!"—thou, happiest above all
Thy fellows,—whom, forsooth, no ills befall
For wasted treasures:—she sings not for thee.—
Thou 'st missed no golden opportunity
To mend thy heart—nor found, to thy dear cost,
How other treasures, not of gold, are lost;—
What time (that talent!) used neglectingly—
What good omitted,—and what evil done—
What warnings scorned—what thoughts, that might have grown
To virtues,—smothered.—Yes, all these and more
Knock at some hearts, but come not near *thy* door.
Smile while thou canst—the time may be when thou
Wilt shrink at homeliest truth,—as I do now.

XVIII.

'Tis mine to feel the soul's deep consciousness,
When gazing, gazing back o'er life's career,
The dreary sense of many a wasted year
Drenches the heart, in all the bitterness
Of memories sad, which have no power to bless.
To have lived for less than little—nothing, worth
Man's higher heritage,—and, mid the birth
Of the mind's dark regrets, to feel no less

* Note 7.

The reckless triflings which have left me bare
In the heart's riches :—yes ! such thoughts there are
To touch with wormwood joys which still I have,
(Oh, fondly hugged !) whilst others from the grave
Rise up to prove their harvest hath but been
That fruit with tempting rind and ashes all within.*

XIX.

But hence—away with this lorn wandering,
Mid thoughts of ugly shape, which darkly throng
Around me :—hence—I want to be among
The woods, the corn-fields, and there featly bring
A thousand sweets of Nature's offering
Back on the heart : then hie through many a scene,
Where, near the country-house or village green,
Remembrance may call up the sports of spring
And holiday : for what, though borne along
By fate to breathe beneath another sky,
Still the old days of frolic, dance, and song,
Live in the pleasant sadness of a sigh.—
Ah ! whilst it throbs, can time or distance sever
This heart from thee, my native Devon ? never !

* Note 8.

XX.

Those woody dells—that knoll—the plain—the hill—
All, all bring back old days: the very breeze
That sings its summer song among those trees,
Mingling its murmurs with that gurgling rill,
And, ah! the pathway of the field, where still
I trace the wanderings of mine infant feet,
Each tells a story, as when old friends meet,
Till sweet o'ergushings from the heart distil
In "rain o' the eyes:"—and, lo! yond clump of firs
On Mutley's boy-famed height—there my young years
Looked bright with many a joy. How dear to me
The season when youth's own heart-melody
Poured jocund forth its notes of uncared gladness,
Without the discord of a jarring sadness.

XXI.

Then, let the memory of each o'er-past year
Bring back the freshness of its day of spring.
Spirits of the past!—wherefore would ye wring
A brooding heart with thoughts so dark and drear
As mock the kindly influence of a tear?
Ah, since your happiest voice hath power to raise
But mournful echoes from departed days—
Since ev'n the brightest of your hours appear

Like mourners—may such gentler memories
As live in snatches of old well-known songs
Be chiefly mine ; and like melodious sighs,
Steal o'er the soul's fine chord, which fain prolongs
Blithe notes to a sweet sadness, till they seem
Like the heart-echoed music of a lovely dream.*

XXII.

And now, methinks, I stand upon *that* HOE,
Losing myself in grandeur. Years are brought
Back by the subtle process of the thought,
And the heart reels as Memory's visions throw
Time—space—grief—all aside. And hark—below—
The eternal tides, that chafe the pebbled beach,
Mix their old music with the sea-birds' screech,
Thrilling the soul with mingled sounds, that grow
Ev'n to a voice-like influence. On this side
MOUNT EDGECOMBE, rearing high its woody pride,
Smiles in green triumph, while with sterile brow
The far stretched bleakness of th' opposing HEIGHT
Frowns darkly down on waves that ne'er may know
The freshly sparkling gleams of morning's lovely light.

* Note 9.

XXIII.

Beautiful contrast! what a glorious beam
Glows of The Sound's mid-waters, as they play
In all the freshness of the new-born day.
Most like the young heart's buoyance, when the gleam
Of joy rests on it, and life's morning dream
Gilds all the future with its own pure ray.
Lo! yet an hour, and all yond spacious bay
Grows black beneath a cloud—the darkling stream
Frets into billows at the gusty howl
Of the hoarse winds;—deep-mouthed the thunders growl,
And lashing all the waves to fierce commotion
Down pours the tempest on the troubled ocean.
Such are man's life-joys, (nature cries aloud)
A few faint glints; the rest, storm—darkness—and a cloud!

XXIV.

A giant footstep hath been here! Gaze round:
Lo! where the mighty battle must have been—
If fabled, fable meet for such a scene,
Where many a scathed uptossing of the ground
Bespeaks no less a struggle:—here is seen
The sea-worn spot, as ancient stories tell,
Craggy, and stern, and wild—where that vast giant fell:*
And there the great of old, on yond far bound

* Note 10.

Of Cornwall's hills, and each sea-stretching height
Might stand and gorge the terrors of that fight.
—Doubt not, for that in these degenerate days
Our weaker ken would fail; but ye whose praise
Half fosters faith when *magic* tales are told—
Gentles—forget not quite that these are **Tales of Old!**

XXV.

Seaward, far off—now mocking the strain'd sight—
Now for a moment lost beneath the waves,
Whose foaming fury it for ever braves,
Lifts up its head that star-tower of the night,
Whose knitted structure's well-compacted might,
In graceful strength, displays a lasting claim
To be the monument of SMEATON's name.*
Him the toss'd shipman blesses for that light,
Which guides him through the dark and perilous deep
On to the spot where, charm'd, the billows sleep
Within the shelter of a wondrous pile
Of man's vast workmanship—that new-made isle,—
That MARBLE ISLE, brought piecemeal from the shore
To break the weltering waves, and check their savage roar.†

* † Notes 11 and 12.

XXVI.

Hence—to the sources of sublimity,—
And hark!—the brooks—the rills—the streamlets telling
Their ceaseless stories on, for ever swelling
The river-floods that roll by heavily.
Some wild as wildest noise and revelry
Dance over craggy falls—some gently wash
Green banks unchafed—others with dizzy dash
Leap down rough rocks, and plunge on foamingly,
As though in haste to lift the watery pride
Of our old streams, as, broad and broader flowing,
They pour their tumbling tributes to the tide—
Till *here* at length their wedded powers throwing
On ocean's breast, all gather mightily
To one magnificent expanse of sea.

XXVII.

Behold how solemnly those antique woods
Their shadows stretch in broad brown majesty,
Darkening the passage of the river-floods.—
Old haunts! how busily doth fancy's eye
Glance o'er a thousand spots, yet not the less
For transiency drink draughts of beauty in—
Nor lose the influence of your loveliness.—

Thus, in thought-winged swiftness fleeting on
I name ye not: but hold!—where towering high
A huge shape bids us pause. We feel thy grand
Majestic shade—wild, craggy DEWERSTONE,*
Most like a giant's presence—and we stand
Breathing thy name aloud ere we can pass thee by.

XXVIII.

Dewerstone—Dewerstone!—Now onwards stray
By streamlets old, dark moors, and forests green,
O'er heaths that richly tint the chequered scene,
To where these circling rocks, moss-grown and grey,
Dim as the memory of their Druids' day,
Scarce story dusky Eld:—then on, and gaze
Where loftiest Torrs their huge tops proudly raise,
Companioning the clouds—and thence away
To sit and think in some sequestered wood,
Where musing melancholy finds relief,
Poring on thoughts of hoar antiquity—
And lonely hearts indulge their autumn mood,
Catching a voice as every falling leaf
Whispers its story of mortality.—

. . . . . .

* Note 13.

XXIX.

These rhymes—and said I they were coldly taught
To echo 'mid old scenes, and chiefly pore
On phantasies of soulless things ?—No more—
Break up the shackles that would curb dear thought
From rich imaginings, instinct and fraught
With all that o'er those scenes and feelings old
Sheds life and loveliness.—I should have told
Of gentle friends and kindred,—and thus caught
The very soul that ever seems to live
In those two words, shrined in the heart—*my home ;*—
And I might call up some whose names would give
Grace to my muse, and hope for days to come :—
But names are not my cue ; what I impart
Sufficeth me,—I write to mine own heart.

XXX.

Oh ! for some Muse, whose hallowing thoughts might glow
With spirit above—above the loftiest tone
Of words, in saintlier guise to sing of one—
The goodliest, best—yet humblest—that below
Did ever through life's mingled colours show
Tints of the brighter heaven :—away—there's none,
Save of the earth ;—else, haply, might a son,
Warmed by that purer inspiration, throw

Himself, heart, soul, and all, upon one thought
Of filial reverence; till having caught
And fixed the hues of blest humanity,
He might hold up an image gloriously
For men to love, for angels to admire,
And with heart-uttered voice exclaim—"Behold my sire!"

XXXI.

But as it is,—not mine the muse to move
The mantle of humility aside
From that clear breast, where never thought of pride
Marr'd the mild perfectness of christian love:
It asks a finer touch—a chord above
The lowly sound of this my coarser strain—
A harmony of thought, for which in vain,
Athirst for music, oft my spirit strove
In her best hours:—then let me speed my way;
Nor, rude of hand, think meetly to display
That high-helped virtue, which from dawning youth
To full, time-honoured, reverend age, hath striven
To make life's conduct beautiful as truth,
And its whole tenour like one hymn to heaven!—*

* Note 14.

XXXII.

My mother too! thou best that ever bore
That thrilling, tender name, whose sound alone
Makes all the pulses of the heart its own :—
If it be love within the bosom's core
To shrine thee, yet not causelessly deplore
How little of thy perfect, tranquil spirit
Fate, or what 's worse, myself—lets me inherit—
If it be love to feel the heart run o'er
In blessings, yet confess its poverty
In all thy gentleness,—if still to be—
Whate'er to others—ready to resign
All that I have for one dear smile of thine ;
If these be marks of love's reality,
Then none on earth can equal mine for thee.

XXXIII.

Parents, companions, kindred mine, all hail!
Friends of my life, whom time has proved to be
Such as the world has never matched to me—
Oh, deem not that my grateful feelings fail,
For that so late in this—my song—my tale—
Or whatsoever these strains appear to ye,
Poured from the bosom's fount to memory
I say that late I cite ye to my wail

O'er hours long fled, wherein I scarcely knew
How rich my blessings, being blest with you.
Ye had been first in place, even as ye are
The first in heart ;—but, as I gazed from far,
Mixed with your images rose thoughts which tell
Upbraiding tales on which I little loved to dwell.

. . . . . .

XXXIV.

In busy idlesse, at the vacant hour
Of boyhood, when the daily task is done,
How blithely will the thoughtless youngster run
Forth to the fields : off, and away he 'll scour,
As though he shook off trammels of hard power :
O'erjoyed his school imprisonment to shun,
He speeds along, hailing the setting sun,
On nature's richest works to gaze and pore
With pleasure-thrilled heart ; and lucky he
Who using time's chief minutes charily,
Finds after studious labours meet relief
In such a book :—but there was one, whose brief
Moments of gold were deemed of little cost,
Till elder hours, in vain, betrayed how much was lost.

XXXV.

In sooth, mine hero was a heedless wight—*
The single pupil of a peerless sire,
Whose pleasure-blent tuition might inspire
Dullards to hail instruction with delight.—
So richly privileged, he had no right
To be, like others, ready still to make
Excuse for idleness for idlesse' sake:
But he ne'er courted knowledge, till those bright
And transient hours of youth were passed away
With half their priceless freightage—he ne'er dreamed
How wasted time full hardly is redeemed;
Nor thought, till moments pregnant with the fate
Of all his after-life were gone for aye,
How precious was their loss: 'twas then too late!

XXXVI.

Yet match me days so bright as those days were,
When thus with boyhood's opening heart I strayed
Near aldered streams, or through the woodland glade,
And learnt how smiles from some young listener
Could throw a sweeter freshness o'er the year,
Or teach those vesper carollings, which float
From nature's choir, to pour a lovelier note,
By feeling tuned, upon the youthful ear.—

* Note 15.

Match me the moments when the woodbine-shade's
Soft scent, and all the incense of sweet flowers,
Caught richer perfume from some gentle maid's
Young praise,—the while a finer sense found out
(What heart less fond had never dreamt about)
How with a kindred feeling she would tread
Lightlier where violets hide the timid head.
—Match me, I say—oh, bring me back those hours!

XXXVII.

Soul of Procrustes!—there 's a verse too long!
—I think that gentleman in olden time
Might be some critic of the sonnet's chime,
Who gained a murderer's name, because his strong
Rough gripe, throttling young efforts, choked that song
For ages; till at length, in that fair clime
Where love is worship—Italy,—the rhyme
Once more looked up to live for aye among
The blind god's votaries, in a form so fair,
So beautiful, that were't not far above
The critic's reach, Procrustes' self would own
His famous bedstead fitted to a hair—
Ev'n as the world acknowledges its tone
To be the music,—yea, the breath of love.

XXXVIII.

Still should some critic-heir of his to-day
Shake at my extra rhyme his ominous head,
And, like Procrustes, send my muse to bed;
Faith, I 'd "show fight," and try if the lax lay
Might not be championed in the modern way.
I 'd plead ('tis all the fashion) my own cause—
Brow-beat the sage dispensers of the laws,
And, taking for my text "Love's boundless sway,"
Grasp long quotation's literary cudgel
To break the heads of all who dared to judge ill
Of me or mine:—volumes I 'd bring to prove
That the great king of gods and men—young Love,
Might surely snap his sovereign fingers at
A sonnet's rules and limits,—and all that.

XXXIX.

'Tis said that "Love will still be lord of all."—
There 's one quotation, sir,—of which I boast
That 'tis from one who in himself 's a host—
Who?—why, Sir Walter:—so I scorn to fall
A-quoting farther, though within my call
I 've proofs on proofs to throw you on your back.
—But now let 's go upon another tack,
And put a question arithmetical.

Pray, though a sonnet to the very letter
Is deemed " the echo to the seat where love
Sits throned"—would it, d'ye think, be hard to prove,
If fourteen lines are good, that sixteen 's better?
—Ay, but the *rule*, you say—oh, as to that,
Draw in your chair and let us have some chat.

XL.

You say the *rule;* I hate those buckram rules.
Shakspeare, and others of that mighty rest,
(Whose names just now *perscribere longum est)*
Ne'er sought for nature in the musty schools,
But found her in the heart. If critic-tools
Moulded no grace for them (pray pass the bottle)—
If they ne'er found nor sought in Aristotle
Their soul of life and beauty,—were they fools?
—But *verbum sat;*—for sure you 'll frankly own
My cause is gained: and so good night,—I 've done.
—After this scrambling sort of episode,
'Tis time to seek once more the beaten road;
And having done with Love's apology,
Proceed we next to his doxology.

XLI.

Smile of young love!—thine is the brightest gleam
Of human joys that visit this sad earth;
So spell-like,—ev'n dull beings at thy birth
Borrow new souls, while finer natures seem
To grow ethereal; feeling in thy beam
As though, upspringing 'mid sensations new,
Within the heart of hearts a sweet flower grew.
—But who may paint thee—being like a dream
So subtly formed, and oh, too delicate
To live in language;—yet the heart can sate
Itself in silence; yea, the exquisite sense
Only lies deeper being unexpressed:—
Sweet smile! the souls which entertain thee best
Know well how more than words is thy mute eloquence!

XLII.

Oh, in life's early summer there was one
Most precious,—one whose whispered name to me
Was music with a thrill of ecstasy.—
For I had gazed till my young soul was grown
Dizzy with beauty;—yea, ev'n words were gone—
Choked like the faultering wish they would impart,
And smothered in the tremblings of the heart.
—I felt her very silence like a tone

Surpassing words—I deemed that I could drink
Thoughts from her eyes, and felt upon the brink
Of answering—*love;*—but speech I say had fled:
Yet still I gazed—and gazing rivetted
The chain which held me,—but it was not thrall;
For love's young chain is flow'rs—and here young love was all.

XLIII.

It was the morn of life, and none did know,
Or think, or guess, or fancy that o'er me
Then swayed a feeling, tempering the wild glee
Of boyhood's noisy hour;—for it might grow
At times to cloudiness, yet only show
Like April's mood, when smiles soon conquer tears,
As sunshine peeps through showers, and hopes and fears
Make busy pastime on youth's fickle brow.
—So none e'er learnt my tale; and now the seal
Is set for ever;—and though since that hour
This heart full oft hath felt how young eyes steal
The thoughts to their bright glances—oh! not one*
E'er thrilled its chords with such a spell of power
As that young fair enchantress: but—she 's gone.

* Note 16.

XLIV.

Then wherefore dwell thus fondly on a theme
Of feelings which survive but in a sigh—
That unavailing breath of memory?—
Ah! why, since their realities now seem
Like shadows of some ill-remembered dream—
Why reimbody thoughts of pain,—why tell
That thus I vainly loved—and oh! how well?
'Tis for a moment,—chiefly to redeem
One silent pledge long left upon the herse
Of young affections:—'twas, that if my muse
E'er tricked her elder fancies forth in verse,
(So trifles oft are loved and dwelt upon)
Mary—the name of Mary should transfuse
Music o'er one poor line—and now 'tis done!

XLV.

Of woman's gentle, loveliest race, did one
E'er cross my path in being's brightest hour,
And fail to prove, like heaven's best richest dower,
That 'tis indeed not good to be alone?—
But oh, in misery how fitlier shown
What love and sweetness are in all her ways!
Whose hand like her's a drooping head can raise?
Of all that 's best, in all that 's kindliest done,

Woman 's the angel agent.—Loveliest—hail!—
And oh, if e'er this breast's fond fealty,
This bosom-sense of light in life's dark tale,
Swerve from its self-repaying trust in thee,—
If from thy praises my dull tongue refrain,
Or e'er in word or thought I do thee wrong,—
What feeling will my perished heart retain,
Save only one—that I have lived too long!*

XLVI.

Thanks be—so far as I have gone in life,
My heart appropriates not that deprecation;
For, wander where I might—whate'er the station
My fate has bid me fill—in peace—in strife—
In joy—in grief—love's praise has still been rife
Within my breast, where aye some gentle queen
Of beauty has sat throned, though it has been
Unsweetened by that honey-drop—a wife.
To me, like every other son of song,
Affection's brightest thoughts of right belong.
What is a poet—(since I dare to start
My claim to that high title)— with a heart
Dead to the fervid impulses of love,
Albeit no yielding maid his ardent suit approve?

* Note 17.

XLVII.

But I must hasten onwards to the close
Of this my mingled task.—I need not own
How much my song hath changed me, being grown,
Since it began, fond of the power which throws
A charm o'er grief. I feel that memory's woes
Would almost be, whate'er their dark alloy,
Ill bartered for the garishness of joy;*
And that remembered happiness bestows
A soft regret on sighs, until they fill
The heart with feelings which, albeit they borrow
Their sense from loss, are yet not all of sorrow.—
Thus changed, I would not choose but love thee still,
And find for years to come a friend in thee,
Thou soothing, painful, kind, sad, pleasant Memory.

XLVIII.

Plymouth!—wherein, from the remotest age
Which knew thee, Charity hath found her shrine,†
May I not glory hailing thee as mine?
There still lives moist-eyed Pity to assuage
The pangs of misery, or soothe the rage
Of fierce disease,—there ever stands the door
Of Mercy open to the houseless poor,—
There 's not a sorrow written in the page

* † Notes 18 and 19.

Of human wretchedness,—there 's not a woe
But finds some gentle ministry ;—and though
In later years their strength thy children bend
To highest darings, not the less they blend
The growth of intellect—the march of mind—
With all that soothes the sorrows of mankind.

XLIX.

Lives there who doubts that, in our age, thy race
Aspire by noblest efforts to refine
That native ore, true produce from the mine
Of early worth,—go, let him strive to trace
What meaner lesson taught their heads to raise
That Dome with fadeless riches overspread,*
Of the great living and the mighty dead,—
Or, decked with relics of the Phidian grace,
What bade yond Fane in Doric dignity †
Spring up for them and their posterity—
There a fit treasure-house for many a rare
Bequest of glorious intellect,—and here
A goodly shrine for all that man may find
Of beautiful in art—the heir-looms of the mind !

* † Notes 20 and 21.

L.

See where in almost pristine beauty stands
The god, o'ercoming Python :—in his eye,
His brow, his mouth, methinks dwells prophecy
Of times to come, when barbarism's bands
Shall all be broken ; yea, his very hands
Look pow'r, and all his aspect has a sense,
Speaking of days when bright intelligence
Shall reign triumphantly in all the lands!
—There too, thou wave-born goddess ! that dost seem
The sweet fulfilment of a poet's dream,*
Hast found meet home, where beauty's daughters shine
In native, heart-enchanting modesty ;
And their pure glow of loveliness, like thine,
Borrows its freshest graces from the sea.

LI.

Another, yet another still succeeds.—
My heart 's in tune—I cannot choose but write :
A moment more,—and then indeed good-night.
And if, in the loud world, there 's one who reads
These versicles of mine—(ill-matching beads
Strung in the Muse's desultory mood
Idly together)—and shall find one good,
One gentler feeling touched, nor seek for deeds

* Note 22.

That stir rough spirits with a fiercer strain,—
He is my friend by sympathy, and may
Read them, perchance, for friendship's sake, again.
If not,—why here at once in peace we part—
I and the world—since, as I said, the lay
Was meant for what a friend might share in,—my
own heart.

LII.

(On the near prospect of revisiting my native Town.)

Garden of England, Devon! once again*
With closer feelings and a nearer hope
I yearn towards thee, holding in the scope
Of the heart's optics thee and all thy train
Of loveliness and grandeur:—not in vain
Thought fondly dwells on old realities,
As on my sight my birth-place seems to rise!
Hail to thee, PLYMOUTH!—hail thy broad blue
main!—
Welcome old haunts, where every side I trace
The steps of boyhood;—there 's the gray old tower
That tells me tales of many a happy hour:
And now I feel the sea-breeze on my face—
Oh, once more welcome! welcome hill and vale—
Scenes of mine innocent days—once more, ALL HAIL!

* Note 23.

STANZAS,

Written several years after the foregoing Sonnets had been completed for publication.

Time passing on and on, still left confined
These homebred thoughts of many things (by distance,
That softening perspective of the mind,
More gently touched)--in yet unseen existence;
While, year by year, to the old scenes I came,
And found my joys the same.

There was the grandeur of the wide-spread main;
Kindred and friends, with all their social ties;
The picture and the people;—there again
The hills, the valleys, sweet varieties,
Pleasantly crowding on the heart and eye,
And nothing seemed to die.

And Retrospection, in unheeded slumber,
Still kept its nook: there was no wak'ning change
In things that were—the Poet still could number
His lines, and smile to feel his bosom's range
As in his prime;—with only this to rue—
That his own tale was true.

* * * * * *

At length, I came again to the loved land
Of young enjoyments—and Time's touch had dealt
More visibly with things that might not stand
Its mouldering influence:—the change was felt—
Associations that long used to please
Were fading by degrees.

I too was changed; for looking back to see
What were my feelings when the book was written,
I found that time had strangely dealt with me;
For the wild fondness that my heart had smitten
In early days, had vanished—vanished quite
Before a steadier light.

Some hearts perchance were not as they had been,
And many things had felt sophistication;
The rough, unpolished nature of some scene
Long-loved, had bowed to fashion's alteration:
Yet still, life's goodliest prize maintained for me
Its old integrity.

* * * * * *

Again I touch my birth-soil—oh, to find
A dreary change press heavy on the soul!—
The arch's keystone could no longer bind—
The fine completeness of the perfect whole
Is broken now,—since one—the first—the best—
Is gone into his rest!

Alas, the void!—where is the cherished place,
The home of many years of happiness?
Fall'n with that fall!—I look upon my race,
And see the widowed and the fatherless.—
Our world's chief charm—the glory and the pride—
Sunk low with him that died.

But, what in varying life might grow less dear
Mortality thus makes unchangeable :
The loved, the sacred relics resting here,
Bind round the heart of hearts a lasting spell :—
Firm is the hold which now these precincts have—
Lo ! yonder hallowed grave.

NOTES

FOR

RETROSPECTION.

Note 1, page 50.

Yea, e'en yond lumpish Guildhall's lack of grace.

THE Plymouthian reader must here give me credit for no wilful plagiarism with respect to a bard whose strains whileome managed to mingle the "bulky" beauties of this Guildhall with the "divine perfume" of certain adjacent "kitchen gardens." That force of local attachment which extracts fragrance from cabbages, may with equal facility reform a wry feature into grace:—mine can only do so by the dim influences of memory and a softening distance; *i. e.* seeing the thing through a fog.

Note 2, page 51.

The wish to be a very boy again.

"Claret for boys—port for men—brandy for heroes," said Doctor Johnson: "Why then," exclaimed Burke, "hand *me* the claret."

Note 3, page 53.

By Jove, I'll try my luck with stanza ten.

I hope my readers will not fail to observe the peculiarly apposite propriety of this adjuration, "by Jove!" as it is not only

asking paternal permission for his daughter's figuring away in the fandango of the following stanza, but is made in something like the privilege of relationship,—Retrospection being nearly allied to Memory, the reputed mama of these nine young ladies: so that in leading down this dance, the assortment of partners recommended by the jealous gentleman in the comedy is strictly attended to. And the upshot of all is, that the author has a natural right to be in the Muses' train.

Note 4, page 53.

Stanza the Tenth.

This sonnet, and that which precedes it, were written before I was aware of the epigram by Callimachus, published in the Anthologia, and given with a translation in Burney's History of Music. In it the names of the nine Muses are celebrated in as many lines.

Note 5, page 55.

For ah, the sunshine of the stainless breast.

When all was sunshine in each little breast.

ROGERS.

The tear forgot as soon as shed,
The sunshine of the breast.

GRAY.

Note 6, page 56.

Oh, then all nature teems with eloquence.

Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in every thing.

As You Like It.

Note 7, page 58.

Smile—scorn the Muse's plain morality,
And say, 'tis trite.

Very true;—and the good-natured reader may, if he likes, smile at me with Cicero's *Utitur in re non dubia testibus non necessariis.* As, however, a truism will be despised only by those who are out of its reach, I should be very glad to find, in the wide-spreading of the said smile, reason good for *ousting* this stanza from the next XIX. editions of my book. Meantime, I have Horace on my side:—

Non possidentem multa vocaveris
Rectè beatum—rectius occupat
Nomen beati, qui deorum
Muneribus sapienter uti
Duramque callet pauperiem pati, &c.

And what did He, "the best that e'er wore earth about him," but sanction that which was already evident when he said, "Man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth," immediately preceding that expressive parable of one who laid up treasures for himself and was not rich towards God.

Note 8, page 59.

That fruit with tempting rind, and ashes all within.

This emblematical sort of fruit is a staple commodity in Poet-land.—See the White Devil of John Webster, quoted in Lamb's Specimens:—

You see, my lords, what goodly fruit she seems,
Yet, like the apples travellers report
To grow where Sodom and Gomorrah stood,

I will but touch her and you straight shall see
She 'll fall to soot and ashes.

Also, in the third canto of Childe Harold :—

Like to those apples on the Dead Sea's shore,
All ashes to the taste.

Cum multis aliis.

Note 9, page 61.

Like the heart-echoed music of a lovely dream.

Like the faint exquisite music of a dream.

LALLA ROOKH.

Note 10, page 62.

The sea-worn spot, as ancient stories tell—
Craggy, and stern, and wild, where that vast giant fell.

A tradition mentioned in some of the old Chronicles, that the giant Gog-Magog, or Goer-madog, was slain here in a wrestling match with Corineus the *fidus Achates* of Brutus or Brute. The Hoe at Plymouth and St. Michael's Mount in Cornwall contend for the honour of this gymnastic of the olden time; and I believe some other places likewise,—perhaps as many as for the birth-place of Homer. I have been baffled in my search to trace whether records of this ancient and illustrious lesson in the Fancy have been piously handed down from sire to son in any particular family: but one thing is certain, that the lads of Devon and Cornwall have, from time immemorial, been most celebrated in the art of *Wrāstling*. The *hug* of the latter professors is remarkably dislocating;—any thing but fraternal: but the *kick* of the former being equally perilous, the claim of each county must remain an historical doubt, till some musty record is brought to light, proving whether this son of Anak proceeded by kick or hug.

The story of Gogmagog and Corineus may after all be only a

fable, and mean something, or nothing, or any thing:—perhaps the gigantic influence of aboriginal savagery fighting against and subdued by civilization; but that can hardly be it either: no matter! Whoever the gentleman was, I am beholden to him for a sonnet.

Note 11, page 63.

——— *the monument of Smeaton's name.*

The Edystone lighthouse, built on a rock in the sea, about fourteen miles S. S. W. of Plymouth. It was begun in 1756, and finished in 1759. A dreadful storm in 1762 was the first decided test of its strength. One of the persons who doubted the adequacy of any structure in so exposed a situation, said on the morning after that storm—"If the Edystone lighthouse is standing now—it will stand till the day of judgement." The structure is so compact and admirably adapted for its purpose, that in no storm is its stability now called in question more than that of the rock on which it stands.

Before the present lighthouse, there had been two others—one built by Mr. Henry Winstanley, of Littlebury, Essex, a man remarkable for a curious ingenuity in mechanics,—and this was blown down in 1703, Mr. Winstanley perishing with it. The second, erected under the direction of Mr. J. Rudyerd, was begun in 1706, finished in about three years, and burnt down in 1755. On this occasion, one of the men employed in the lighthouse met his death in an extraordinary manner, by hot lead going down his throat while he was looking up to observe the progress of the flames. He was ninety-four years of age, and as he lived several days after the accident, the surgeons were incredulous as to the fact of the molten lead having got into his stomach; but he persisted in his story, and after his death, be-

tween seven and eight ounces of lead were found as he had described.

For the peculiarities in the formation of the present lighthouse, see *A narrative of the building, and a description of the construction of the Edystone Lighthouse, with stone, &c. by* JOHN SMEATON, civil engineer, F. R. S.

Note 12, page 63.

Within the shelter of a wondrous pile
Of man's vast workmanship, &c.

The BREAKWATER in PLYMOUTH SOUND. A stupendous undertaking, no less than the formation of what may fairly be called an island, for the purpose of rendering the anchorage more safe and commodious. It is formed of blocks of limestone varying in weight from ten tons downwards; and the mode of procuring this stone at the quarries (the right of which, for the time being, is purchased of the Duke of Bedford) and its subsequent application to the work, is at present one of the "lions" of Plymouth. The first stone, weighing about eight tons, was dropped into the sea, with some ceremony, on the 12th of August, 1812, (the birthday of George the Fourth, then Prince Regent)—and the quantity of stone used for the work, from that time to the present, amounts to about two million four hundred thousand tons. The first idea of such a protection for the harbour suggested itself to, and was proposed by, Mr. Smith, formerly the Master-Attendant of Plymouth Dock-Yard, though his plan differed from that recommended by the late Mr. Rennie and Mr. Whidbey, which is that at present in operation, under the able superintendence of the latter gentleman, who was mainly instrumental in its being undertaken where it now is.

The expression, "*that marble isle*," is strictly true, the ma-

terials being, I believe entirely, limestone. Polished specimens of the beautifully veined marble, in the shape of small ornaments, may be purchased for a trifle on the spot.

Note 13, page 65.

——— *wild, craggy Dewerstone.*

The Dewerstone Rock is a striking feature in the midst of some of the most romantic scenery in which the neighbourhood of Plymouth abounds. Strangers should visit it, as well for its own wild magnificence, as that the road to it leads through an almost unparalleled variety of natural beauty and grandeur; from among which the eye can look abroad on no side without resting on an exquisite picture. Besides the efforts of numerous native artists (of whom, to avoid any accidental omission, the author does not mention the names, except, in the pride of long intimacy, that of his old and dear companion CHARLES EASTLAKE)—we have of late years seen TURNER and COLLINS delighted in transferring to canvass the natural beauties of the neighbourhood.

Note 14, page 67.

That high-helped virtue, which from dawning youth
To full, time-honoured, reverend age hath striven
To make life's conduct beautiful as truth,
And its whole tenor like one hymn to heaven.

When this and the preceding stanza were written, the venerable subject of their poor eulogy was yet alive.—Alas for us! he lives no more on earth. Time-honoured, indeed, and revered by all, he died after the author had prepared this portion of his volume for the press;—it therefore remains as originally written. It would not be easy, without too much extending the limits of a

note, to speak adequately of the character thus faintly touched. One word, as applying its influence to all the most delightful qualities of the head and the heart, may suffice,—and that word is TRUTH—truth beautifully operating upon a benign goodness almost without parallel, and upon learning and wisdom that were the objects of all reference. "His learning," (to quote from Ben Jonson)—

> His learning savoured not the school-like gloss
> Which most consists in echoing words and terms,
> And soonest wins a man an empty name;
> Nor any long and far-fetched circumstance
> Wrapt in the curious gen'ralties of arts—
> But a direct and analytic sum
> Of all the worth and first effects of arts.

With respect to his public character as a minister of the gospel, I may transcribe a few well-known lines from Chaucer, as not inapplicable:—

> He was a shepherd and no mercenarie—
> And though he holy were and vertuous,
> He was to sinful man not dispitous;
> Ne of his speche dangerous ne digne,
> And in his teching discrete and benigne—
> To drawen folk to heven with fairinesse
> By good ensample was his besinesse;
> A better priest, I trow, ther nowher non is—
> He waited after ne pompe ne reverence,
> And maked him no spiced conscience—
> But Christe's lore and his apostles twelve
> He taught—but first *he folwed it himselve.*

These qualities shed their influence on all the relations of private life, where the graces of charity, lovingkindness, and gene-

rosity combined, with the purest personal virtues, to complete that noblest of characters—a CHRISTIAN GENTLEMAN. His memory is engraven on the hearts of all who knew him—and deepest on the hearts of those who knew him best. Father and Friend—farewell!

Note 15, page 70.

In sooth, mine hero was a heedless wight.
Ah me, in sooth he was a shameless wight.
CHILDE HAROLD.

Note 16, page 75.

——— *oh! not one*
E'er thrilled its chords with such a spell of power.

We need not cite examples from "fair Verona" to show that, in such respects, time in its round works many changes, and that a "fond record" of early days stands its chance like other things of being "wiped away" by other fonder records, that are destined "alone to dwell within the book and volume of the brain unmixed with baser matter."

Note 17, page 77.

Save only one—that I have lived too long.

Procrustes and Co. will be at me again here.—Well! I can't help it. The apology made in stanza XXXIX. for the excess of stanza XXXVI. may be repeated for this—"It is the cause, my soul—it is the cause!"

Note 18, page 78.

Ill bartered for the garishness of joy.

This line is a theft from Mr. Coleridge; unless a prompt acknowledgment and the sincere offering of admiration for that

poet's works, help to acquit me—or at least allow me to "plead to the minor offence" of borrowing.

Note 19, page 78.

PLYMOUTH—*wherein from the remotest age*
Which knew thee, Charity hath found her shrine.

This town has been, and still is, remarkable for its many charitable institutions for the alleviation of human wretchedness in every shape in which it can claim commiseration. Here, as every where else, none are so active and indefatigable in these labours of love as that interesting half of human creation, whom Burns in his natural admiration has considered as Nature's finished work:

Her prentice han' she tried on man,
And then she made the lasses, O!

Note 20, page 79.

That dome with fadeless riches overspread.

The Public Library.

Note 21, page 79.

Or, decked with relics of the Phidian grace,
What bade yond Fane in Doric dignity
Spring up for them and their posterity.

The Plymouth institution, called The Athenæum, though with an obvious tendency to foster a race of coxcomical smatterers (as already evident), is nevertheless capable (as is also evident) of being made subservient to useful purposes, having for its object the promotion of science, literature, and the fine arts; and boasts among its members (honorary and else) many

distinguished persons. In the lines they will recognize an allusion to their motto—"Τοις νυν και τοις επειτα."

His present Majesty, George IV., has given to this society casts by Westmacott, from the Metopes and Panathenaic Procession, of what are called the "Elgin Marbles." Poor Phidias! 'tis hard enough that your name should be lost in that of one, whose claim to the adjunct even of "Preserver," is scarcely yet decided by the opinion of the world.

Note 22, page 80.

There too, thou, wave-born goddess, that dost seem
The sweet fulfilment of a poet's dream,
Hast found meet home.

Messieurs Thomson, Lord Byron, Croly, and Co. have all "had at" the Medicean Venus;—why may not I, having first duly acknowledged my want of originality? Of all the poetic offerings laid at this shrine, I cannot but think Thomson's allusion the best. His single line—

"So stands the statue that enchants the world,"

says just enough to fill the mind with an imagination of beauty. Lord Byron's stanzas, though very delightful, are but an elaborate attenuation of that one line. Should any object to me, that I have not sufficiently indulged in the "jargon of the marble mart" while speaking of this statue, I must answer as West did his friend Gray—

Stultule!—marmoreâ quid mihi cum Venere?
Hic veræ—hic vivæ Veneres, et mille per urbem,
Quarum nulla queat non placuisse Jovi.

Note 23, page 79.

Garden of England, Devon! &c.

The rural beauties of Devonshire have warmed many of her sons into poetry. I need not mention those who have written

in later years. In the olden time we rank among our eulogists, Drayton, a stranger, in his Poly-olbion ; and William Brown, a native, writer of Britannia's Pastorals. He thus speaks of Devonshire :—

" Hail ! thou my native soil,—thou blessed plot
Whose equall all the world affordeth not.
Show me, who can, so many cristal rils
Such sweet-clothed vallies, or aspiring hils,
Such wood-ground, pastures, quarries, wealthy mynes,
Such rocks, in whom the diamond fairely shines—
And, if the earth can show the like agen,
Yet will she fail in her sea-ruling men.
Time never can produce men to oretake
The fames of Greenvill, Davies, Gilbert, Drake,
Or worthy Hawkins—or a thousand more
That by their powre made the Devonian shore
Mock the proud Tagus—for whose richest spoyle
The boasting Spaniard left the Indian soyle,
Banckrupt of store, knowing it would quit cost
By winning this, though all the rest were lost."

POEMS.

Me quoque musarum studium sub nocte silenti
Artibus assuetis solicitare solet.

CLAUDIAN.

POEMS.

LINES

Suggested by a recollection of Paradise Lost.

Hark! was it fancy or a lingering sound
That stole upon the ear?—Methought it came
Like holiest music heard in dreams by night,
Mingling all-wondrously a thousand strains
That vibrate on the heart! It comes again,
And onward swells,—not faintly as before,
In sweet solemnity just motioning
The ambient air,—but hoarselier now it pours—
Rapid and loud,—full streams along—along—
In wild confusedness,—till sense is whelmed
Beneath the rush of congregated sounds!

Come, Memory! let us live o'er past delights
As, wave o'er wave, the sea of thought rolls on;
Come, disentwine the complicated maze
Of this mixed melody:—and soft,—methinks

The spell hath influence, for the tuneless clash
Obeys the potency, as though there were
For sound, as sight, some magic instrument*
To turn a shapeless chaos into grace.
Grace, not mere beauty, but propriety
Of many-varying sound; for Horror's voice,
Striking on hearts congenial with itself,
Not less hath proper grace, than loveliness
Heard in the music of the mountain pipe:—
Tempests, and clouds, and thunderings—each and all—
Are they less graceful in sublimity
Than summer is in flowery joyousness?
And are the sighings of Æolian harps
More gracefully accordant with pure souls,
Than, when attuned to what is terrible,
The dizzy dash of cataracts, or the din
Of Satan's new-found thunder, 'mid the rout
Of spirits darkly gladdening in its roar?

* Alluding, as no doubt the reader sees, to the cylindrical mirror of the Anamorphosis. See a fine application of it in the tragedy of REMORSE:—

> In the future,
> As in the optician's glassy cylinder,
> The indistinguishable blots and colours
> Of the dim past collect and form themselves,
> Upstarting in their own completed image.

But hush !—what sounds dwell on my ravished ear—
For now in loftiest strains ascending high,
Exultingly the measure seems to mount
Like hymns of joy, when spirits disenthralled
Send praises forth in saintly orisons.
—Now, grating harsh, 'tis like the noise of strife,
With clank of war, and millions militant,
And shouts, and triumphings, and piercing shrieks
As of a falling myriad hurled from heaven !

* * * * *

Oh, what a breathing of unmixed delight
Was in *that* note; as 'twere, in sooth, the breath
Of fresh-born Purity, ere Guilt and Shame
Had brought in Discord.— * *
* * * Sure nought less than heaven
Inspires that solemn rapture: hark! it quires
As though the opening gates above, let forth
Strains of that ever-during harmony
Which rises round the seraph-cinctured throne,†
And thrills the high-wrought soul to ecstasy.

* * * * *

† Aye rising round the sapphire-coloured throne
To Him that sits thereon.
MILTON AT A SOLEMN MUSIC.

But ah! a withering cry—awful and drear,
Whose sound is desolation, rises now,
Mixing its dismal music with a groan
From shuddering nature;—whilst dark forms of hell
Howl its black horrors, and, with fiendish laugh,
Enjoying Mischief's triumph, yell aloud
That Man, that Man hath fall'n! Then throng amain
Heart-riving cries of Conscience—Terror's groan—
And next a starting from a well-known voice
That once brought joy:—then mingled wail and woe
And words of Wrath—that early child of Guilt,—
Sorrow, and suffering—and then, *that word*—
Heard through a rushing like the mighty wings
Of parting cherubim—one fatal word—
At sound of which earth trembling to its base
Seems struck as with concentrate thunders—DEATH!

* * * * *

Deep, desolate silence echoes that dread name,
And all seems lost,—save that amid the gloom
And that unnatural hush,—a still, small voice,
Just syllabling a distant conquering,
Floats like a song of mercy to the soul,
And whispers there is hope:—there is—there is—
And now a dying cadence closes all!

. . . . .

But fancy's dim remembrancers are gone,
And pleasure grows substantial, as the eye
Scans every wonder in the glorious page,
And, glistening with delight, asserts its share
In the great testament which gives the world
Eternal heirship of a mighty mind!

LIBERTY,

(from an unpublished poem.)

Stone walls do not a prison make
Nor iron bars a cage;—
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for an hermitage.
LOVELACE.

HAIL, blessed Liberty!—that art to those
Who know thee right, indeed a deity!
Hail, thou fine freedom of the mind, with whom
The strongest prison bars are but a mock
Of opposition to the unshackled soul!
Thy magic touch, dear Liberty! can charm
The noisome dungeon to a blest retreat;—
By thee the dank and steamy air is turned
To sweet and balmy breathing:—thou canst make
The dreariest solitude grow populous—
And in the darksome vault no lack is found
Of the ever-cheering sun when thou art near.
—Blest with thy spirit's holy ministry,
Man has a sanctuary in his heart
That shuts him safe from human accidents:—
There he can bask in sunshine of his own—

There he enjoys the sweetest fellowship—
There his frank thoughts can still retire and feel
Free as the breeze that fans the highest peak
Of his own native hills;—there calm and pure
As dreams of infancy, ere yet a thought
Is caught from years to ruffle its young sleep,
He feels above his fate;—there smiles at pain—
There finds in sorrow, joy—nay, life in death,—
For there content, and peace, and heaven are found
Dwelling with innocence. To this we come—
Virtue is Liberty,—there is none else.
—True Freedom is not Faction's demigod—
And lives not in that fever of the blood,
Which, madly raging for forbidden things,
Hurries its furious worshippers to hail
Him as a patriot, who is but a knave
Plotting to rise by wrong:—but when the heart,
As from a citadel of goodly thoughts,
Sends forth its deeds in noble championship,
Fetterless—fearless—habitless—like Truth—
That is true Liberty;—therefore I hail
Virtue as Liberty—there *is* none else!

ADDRESS

FOR AN ACTOR QUITTING THE STAGE.

Vitæ summa brevis spem nos vetat inchoare longam.
HOR. LIB. I. OD. IV.

'Tis closed! the actor's mimic art is o'er,
And life's "unreal mockeries" are no more:—
Youth's wild, romantic joys have passed away,
And Time at length has brought me to decay.

Sure these worn limbs which scarce their weight sustain—
This age, which turns ev'n duty here to pain,
Are warnings sent to bid me trim life's fire
Ere the pale flame that lingers shall expire;
And blow the spark with all that 's left of breath
To light my steps the way to "dusky death."

But ere I go, one anxious task remains—
Pleasing, yet mournful,—healing while it pains,—
'Tis on the treasured Past to fondly dwell,
Then sigh my latest thanks, and say—*Farewell!*
To bend these grateful looks once more on you,
And breathe one lasting, evermore Adieu!

Oh, if big words were made for thoughts like mine,
Here the fond Muse might swell the pompous line—
Here pour her strains on deeds of other days—
The thousand joys, the vanished dreams of praise;
The rushing memory of times gone by,
The inspiring hopes, the cherished flattery
Which fed my life through every changing stage
In youth—in manhood—even to old age:
—But, ah! what pomp of words, what poet's song,
Speaks like the sigh which struggles with the tongue,
When fond remembrance of departed years
Melts all our little eloquence to tears?

Forgive this weakness:—'tis a trying scene
Which shuts us out from all that we have been—
And tears which sometimes speak the boy again,
May, at an hour like this, confess the man.
Can I forget that "such things were most dear"—
To one who reaped his fairest harvest here;
That here I oft have struck great Shakspeare's lyre—
Here fondly caught your bard's ethereal fire—
Here shadowed forms his magic pencil drew,—
And, when no more I spread his stores for you,
That 'tis from hence, at last, I cross the bourne
Of old endearments—never to return?

No—'tis for stoic-pride, not mine, to shun
The truest mark of man—to *feel* like one.

Ye generous friends! whose names my latest breath
Shall utter still—still bless in struggling death—
Oh, might I hope, when Time has closed the door
And drawn his curtain o'er my parting hour,
You 'd not forget me quite—I 'd ask no more.
—For me, where'er the Fates my path shall pave,
Whatever road leads me towards the grave,—
Thence grateful thoughts shall ofttimes wander here—
There Memory hallow still the parting tear;—
There shall remembrance of this hour impart
A gleam of evening sunshine to this heart.

THE GRANDMOTHER'S GRAVE.

(A mother to her natural child.)

Sleep on, dear offspring of unhallowed love—
This dreary bosom yet is warm for thee;—
Sleep on, my baby, gently pillowed here.
No madd'ning memory—no chiding thoughts
Of wayward childhood—nor the dread array
Of faults and follies cherished into sin,—
Can mar the softness of thine innocent rest.
And when beneath the sod thy mother sleeps
That sound, sound sleep, when dreams shall scare no more,
Lift up thy little hands for thankfulness
That she was lost to thee ere ripened years
Had taught thee how to sting a parent's life.
Oh! when from mine, thy being's crime drew forth
One bland remonstrance—I,—foul parricide—*

* A parricide, strictly speaking, is the slayer of a father; but as precedent is not wanting for the use of the word indifferently

Flung back, for all her care, a withering curse,
Which struck her aged sorrows to *this grave*.
Here—here she lies—Oh, God! I have no mother!

for either parent, I have preferred it here as more significant of moral action than the otherwise equivalent word murderess—or even matricide.

PARGA.

So lost to all the finest charities,—
Parga, it is not *England* that decrees
To cast thy children forth without a home;—
It is *not* England that has sealed their doom
To wander countryless, or breathe as slaves
The air in which the Moslem standard waves:
No; in her spirit never be it said
The holy cause of Freedom was betrayed—
She could not crush a nation's liberties!
—But should there be——nay, 'tis not for this age—
Our country surely reads not in her page
So base a name;—yet, oh! should there be one
Of soul too far aloof to catch the tone
Of Mercy pleading,—one whose heart all dead *

* The cession of Parga followed as an unhappy consequence of that worst effect of war and human weakness conjoined, by which *policy* is too readily admitted, among great nations, as a palliation for trenching upon the natural rights of the less powerful; and really the expulsion (as it turned out) of the Parganotes from their native soil was, at the best, a heartless proceeding. A cause like their's might almost have sanctified a war in their defence. The exhortations of Peter the Hermit, rousing all Europe to the Crusades, might have been thought

To virtue and great nature's sympathies,
Could glory in a baleful power—to brave
And tread down efforts that were made to save;—
If such there be, ah! let it not be said
A *common* curse repaid the injury;
But, when the hour shall come—and it may come,—
That changeful Fate leaves him without a home—
Lost, abject, hopeless, friendless, in his turn,
Then for the curse of generosity,—
Then may some Parganote be near to show
PITY for VENGEANCE—uttering words that burn
With essence of the thunderbolt—"THUS DIDST NOT THOU!"

weak compared with the humble voice of the sons of Parga (that little oasis of Christians in the midst of idolatry), crying out for the preservation of their integrity:—but they came unto their own, and their own received them not. With respect to the defence set up for this unhappy act, how much nobler would it have been to stand on the high ground of a frank and hearty acknowledgment of unforeseen error, than taking refuge in a plea about some treaty, which could never, except by an unwarrantable exercise of power, have implicated those in its conditions who were not parties to its execution. The fate of Parga casts a shadow on a very bright page of our history; and for us it is well she knows that the bulk of the English people sympathized in her misfortunes—that "THEY *could not crush a nation's liberties!*"

LOVE'S DEFENCE.

Those eyes!—ah, what a tale they tell!
Those soft dove's eyes of thine;
If in their beam reproaches dwell,
Oh, what a fault is mine!

If on that face whose beauties melt,
Melt into harmony,
One fear—and I the cause—hath dwelt
To mar its melody;—

If o'er that bosom's gentleness
One jarring thought of me
Hath passed, and taught thy heart distress,
Speak it,—but tenderly:

Oh, speak!—if it be but to speak
When music breathes around;—
Yes, chide me, Julia, with that meek,
Sweet voice's heavenly sound.

Methinks 'twere bliss to *be* in fault
When chiding sounds so dear—
Come, sweetest, give thy bosom's thought
To Edgar's anxious ear.

So silent?—then my fears mistook—
Thy cares spring not from me;—
Yet, now I hear it in that look—
What I,—I false to *thee?*

That look of beautifullest doubt,
Oh, how my heart might bless,—
It tells me some-one cares about
Her Edgar's faithfulness!

It tells me all those dear eyes meant
In their averted beam,—
It calls me back from banishment;—
I wake as from a dream.

Oh, by the hopes I dearest prize!
Hush thy fond heart's alarms;
Nor deem it falsehood that these eyes
Have gazed on meaner charms.

Can such a fault (if *'tis* one) break
My heart's firm truth to thee,—
Can poor, unraptured glances shake
A soul's fidelity?

No,—falsehood lives not in my thought;
And Julia's self shall own,
That what her fears have deemed my fault
Is love for her alone.

Who that admires the garden rose
E'er deems its perfume less,
Though round it many a flow'ret blows
In scented prettiness?

For not a flower of daintiest dress
Or form, was ever seen
To vie in natural loveliness
With beauty's summer-queen.

And what though bright and sunny rays
In others please awhile—
Or pluck a momentary gaze,
Or steal perchance a smile;—

Sure he whose heart the sun-rays warm
May sometimes please his sight,
By tracing all the hues which form
A perfect beam of light.

And thus these wandering looks of mine
Are but pure constancy,
Loving the various tints which shine
Concentred all in thee!

BERTHA AND DURIMEL.

BERTHA.

And you know such an one? Oh, Durimel—
Sure it was fancy's sketch.

DURIMEL.

I know him well!

BERTHA.

What is to come?—You have not shadowed forth
This varied character for nought:—'tis worth
A tale to follow it. Ay, let me see
What and how much I hold in memory.
Thus, as I think, it ran:—A wayward child—
Truant in youth—his manhood strange and wild—
Wilful by turns, and patient—stern and mild—
Changing from glee to gloom, and back again,
None guessing wherefore—haughty most with men
Who served him best, as though he feared to see
Himself acknowledged in dependency—
Proud ever as the proudest 'mid the great,
And humblest still with those whose low estate
Ranked them beneath him;—now wrapped all in self—
Now seeming frank;—one day absorbed by pelf—

The next profuse to folly;—never fix'd
To any noble aim;—at times a saint,
At times a scoffer:—sooth, love, 'tis a mix'd
Strange portrait for a hand like yours to paint.
And, then, the cunning virtue of his smile!
What unsuspecting heart did it beguile?
Who sipped the honied cheat, and tasted gall?—
And yet you say there ran a gleam through all—
A touch of gentleness, which, when his mood
Was harshest, seemed to show that something good
Lived 'mid a thousand fretful phantasies.
Ah, happier is my lot!—you are not these,
My own—own Durimel—except the *last*.
—But now, what clouds your brow?

DURIMEL.

Nothing,—'tis past.

BERTHA.

And you know such an one?

DURIMEL.

I know him well.

BERTHA.

Tell me his name—what is it, Durimel?
That I may warn all maidens of his smiles,
And bid my friends beware his cunning wiles.
Spite of that tenderness, ill must betide
The hapless one doomed to be that man's bride.

DURIMEL.

True—sadly true!—And what if I should speak
The name of one whose fate has made him seek,
And haply win, a lovely one—her heart
A very gem.

BERTHA.

Alas, her fate!—You start—
What ails my Durimel? But *is* this so,
And could this strange and selfish being show
The truth of love?

DURIMEL.

Oh, yes.

BERTHA.

And did he wed
Her that he loved?—Teach me what way he sped.

DURIMEL.

No matter now.

BERTHA.

Nay, you *must* answer that;
And then I 'll drive him from my thoughts.—How? what?
That cloud again?

DURIMEL.

Sweet one, 'tis not for thee,
But on myself I frown:—it may not be

That I should mask the truth—I 'll pour out all
I know—and that is much—though it may pall
Upon your gentle heart. I would it were
A worthier tale for such sweet listener.
Yet hear me, Bertha, hear me to the end,
Ev'n though you learn to scorn my wayward friend.

BERTHA.

Call you him friend in sooth ?—and I, your more
Than friend so long, ne'er heard of him before.

DURIMEL.

You, you have seen him oft ;—Bertha, to you
He has seemed fair :—but to my tale. 'Tis true,
Though his attendant virtue has been love,
And 'mid his fitful life ne'er failed to prove
Some harmony of soul ;—yet, even here
He was a changeling—some say not sincere.

BERTHA.

How could it be but so ?—Why, now you shrink
And draw your hand from mine ;—nay, I shall think—
Oh ! 'twas to hang my lute upon that bough.
This looks indeed like tarrying. Well, then,—now
Begin your strange friend's tale. The darkening west
No longer shows where the sun went to rest—
Twilight now steals the colour from each flower—
Shades all the prospect round, and makes this bower

Dim and uncertain in its leafy green:
Surely this hour, when little may be seen
Of outward beauty—when the visual sense
Sleeps, and the undivided influence
Of thought is yielded to the listening ear,
Is the fit hour for tales. Come—sit down here:
So, thus—my hand in yours—how can I fail
To be too happy? Now then for the tale.
Oh, I shall listen greedily: in sooth,
I love to hear a voice that sounds like truth.
Well, once upon a time—(word it as though
It passed at least a century ago,
And friendship will be saved)—it was before
Things were as things are now. In days of yore,
A man with strange and troubled visage,—there—
That 's a beginning for you.—Oh, 'tis rare
To see such churls——

DURIMEL.

What, banterer?

BERTHA.

—Truly drawn.

DURIMEL.

I 'll paint him so. He had passed on and on
Life's busy pathroad,—and, from spring's light hours
Till riper summer, deemed that many flowers

Chance-scattered there, were those whose sweets among
'Twere good to dwell;—yea, felt amid the throng
That one, far more than all the rest, could raise
Within his breast the incense of soft praise:
And lo, when youth's wild, idle game was played,
He saw the Past like transient visions fade!
He had, I know, long clinging round his heart
A thought of love—or that which bore love's name;—
That thought is fled—(tush, how unskilled to start!)
What though it lit existence with its flame,

Tis now extinct:—nay more—his earliest years
(I know him well) had felt a tale of tears
To be their own;—'twas of affection crossed—
The enchantment of a being—bright, but lost!—
Of her whose name (and 'twas a gentle one,
Long breathed in sighs and fondly dwelt upon)
Now fills a niche within the Muses' shrine,
Meet offering to the tenderest of the Nine!

BERTHA.

Ay? and so gentle? Come, the tale improves—
One has some hope when ev'n a savage loves.
Cymon himself was tamed and grew polite
When Iphigene first met his wondering sight.

Your friend is full of contrariety—
A very riddle,—yet methinks I see
What bears the semblance of some constancy.

DURIMEL.

No, ev'n that early vision of his breast,
Though long he deemed the boyish feeling sooth,
Has vanished into nothing, like the rest.
A brighter dawn—it seemed the dawn of truth—
Broke later on his heart; for then came one
Whose presence spoke to him, oh! with a tone
Such as none hear, save with the sympathy
Which tunes mere trifles till they seem to be
The music of love's sweet reality!
And he replied in silence:—till at last
The pain—the ill-dissembled pain surpassed
Restraint with him—with her: their eyes confessed
A cherished feeling lingering in each breast,
But still no words—for what had words expressed
Compared with one dear glance from timid eyes,
A look of trust, bidding his hopes arise?

BERTHA.

And he deceived *her* too? But pardon me
Breaking the story's thread. 'Twas strange that he,
This proud, this wilful, faithless one, thus quailed
Before his victim, that ev'n language failed,—

For in the faltering tongue we best descry
The consciousness of love's fidelity.

DURIMEL.

True! what are words? Could any words unfold
More truly thoughts which still remained untold,
Than that not-all-unconscious undisguise,
Which now would leave a white hand's precious prize
A moment longer linked in his than seems
Enough for friends' farewell, when day's bright beams
Are quenched by night? Could language equal such
Soul-eloquence as that electric touch
Which says so nothing, and yet speaks—how much!

BERTHA.

Well painted, sooth! I wish that he—this friend—
May have been *truly* touched: but to the end.

DURIMEL.

'Twas thus with them—a silence understood—
A dumb expression—was their hearts' best mood;
Until one day, when anxious months had taught
That each was all to each, and the drear thought
Of a far separation had o'erwrought
Both hearts well-nigh to breaking—with the fear
That parting unassured by vows was near;
Fancy his joy (a joy despite the sorrow,
Which could not choose but dwell upon the morrow)—

Fancy his thrill of inmost joy, to find
A gentle head upon his breast reclined;—
Her fair head on his breast, and that sweet face
Hiding its blushes in that resting-place
As a dear refuge.

BERTHA.

Softly, Durimel,
The tale recalls a day, on which to dwell
Is oft my memory's fondness;—'twas that one
That made me—oh! not lightly won—your own!
A thought springs up—this story goes so near
To one I know full well—ah, me! I fear—
My mind misgives me,—yet it cannot be—
And yet ——. Go on.

DURIMEL.

He gazed with ecstasy,
And as he gazed, what saw he?—lo! a clear
Bright diamond dropped from azure-mine—a tear—
A tear for *him!* What could he but rejoice—
Love that had found no words, here found a voice.

BERTHA.

Haste! tell me, Durimel, what followed this?

DURIMEL.

Why that which lifted him to joy—to pride—
The pure high rapture of love's fervent kiss—
Not granted quite, and yet not all denied:

The sign, the gentle sign, at once revealing
All that remained of conscious hearts' concealing--
A sweet relying pressure softly sealing
His everlasting truth for weal or woe!
What words were then poured out *they* only know;
But present, absent, wheresoe'er he go,
Let him be hovering near, or wandering far,
That gentle lady is his guiding star:
Her very name is with him as a spell
Of binding tenderness.

BERTHA.

Now, tell me—tell
Their names—his—hers?

DURIMEL.

Bertha and Durimel!

BERTHA.

And is it even so!

DURIMEL.

'Tis even so.

BERTHA.

(*repeating*)
"His everlasting truth for weal or woe?"

DURIMEL.

Yes, Bertha, yes! Yet, if the past to thee
Seem a dark augury, hate me and flee.

Ah! for your sake, why did I not withstand
The gentle pressure of that fair, soft hand?—
Why did I seek to link a precious fate
Like yours, with one it were more safe to hate?
I know, and yet there 's madness in the thought,
Your happiest, fairest lot, were that which taught
Your heart to free itself. In me you see
That one whom now, albeit unwittingly,
You scorned;—the wayward, haughty, wilful, wild,
Strange, selfish, changeful one,—now stern, now mild,
None guessing wherefore,—him whose mind's dominion
Ne'er holds him settled in a right opinion,—
Him—him—so light in love from boyhood's hour
It seldom swayed beyond the moment's power.
The treasure, which in thee I madly won,
I should have had the honesty to shun
Till you had known, by rote, the tale which now
Has set its seal of sadness on your brow.
In the wild whirl of love's sweet fear and doubt,
My thousand faults had vanished—and about
My heart a light sprang up, that shone above
The glare of self-reproaches:—it was love—
Love flattered me into forgetfulness
Of what I was—and am;—for not the less,

Though faithful, am I such as never durst
Have sought your love, had you but known the worst.
And now I tell the tale—albeit 'tis late—
That you may yet be saved from such a fate
As may be her's who trusts her life to one
With heart and thoughts like mine. The tale is done!
I say 'twas told—yes, Bertha, for your sake—
To spare *your* heart—for *mine*, why let it break!
Despise me, and yet pity me,—for then
The penalty will wound me deepest, when
I think of one so wronged—and yet so kind
That ev'n injustice could not sway her mind
From its own sweetness;—thus one thought unmixed
Within this heart for ever shall be fixed:
Her loss whose worst reproach was but a tear
Gentle as angels are—and oh, how dear!
Now, speak my sentence—tenderly.

BERTHA.

(*placing his hand at her heart.*)
Tis here!

SONNET,

On a changed lover.

And this is he whose heart long time had fed
Upon a thought of early boyish love,
As though no later fondness might so move
The trembling chords:—yet, never be it said,
Though changed from what he was, that Love is dead—
For there are eyes whose beams (oh, far above
Earth's priceless gems!) outvying the meek dove
In tenderness, have a new being shed
With radiance all so gentle that it seems
Like moonlight after lightning. The wild dreams
Of a tumultuous memory are flown,
And all is quiet now. I heard him own
They were but visions that *could* vanish,—*this*
"The sober certainty of waking bliss!"

FRIENDSHIP'S VALENTINE.

TO VIOLA.

Maiden, in whom the spirit sweet
Of Shakspeare dwells as it were thine,
Oh, blame not one who comes to greet
Thy beauties with a Valentine!

For know, fair child of minstrelsy,
That in the world's wide wilderness
There 's one, unknown, who watches thee
With all a brother's tenderness.

What though no dearer name he own
Than neighbour, yet that name may blend
With all that makes him, though unknown,
All that he feels himself—thy friend.

Then, fairest! though unskilled his Muse
Who lays this verse on friendship's shrine,
Accept it kindly, nor refuse
To smile on friendship's Valentine.

If music's powers have oft-times warmed
The coldest hearts to sympathy;
If ev'n the savage breast is charmed
By fairy spells of melody;

Ah, marvel not, sweet girl! that one
Whose "heart of hearts" ne'er yet was chilled
Nor dead to music's meanest tone,
Should, when he hears *thy* voice, be thrilled.

Yet, 'tis not merely music's grace,
Though of thy soul it form a part,—
'Tis not alone a lovely face
Gains thee the offerings of the heart:

But 'tis that guardian modesty's,
Fine self-respect's in-dwelling sense,
Shedding on opener qualities
A purer, deeper influence.

Yes, more than all, that rarer feeling
  Living around thee like a spell,
And o'er thy best endowments stealing,
  Makes all who see thee—wish thee well.

Then, maiden, though unskilled his Muse,
  Who lays this verse on friendship's shrine,
In friendship take it,—nor refuse
  One smile to grace his Valentine.

THE OLD HAT.

[I HAVE been accused of borrowing ideas for the following Poem from Lord Byron; and I therefore owe it to my character to declare, that as long ago as his Lordship was at Harrow School, before he had written a line of poetry, I threw out in his presence some suggestions as the groundwork of a Poem, which would show a man, like my hero, abandoned by his friends for pertinaciously wearing an old hat. Lord B.'s poem of "DARKNESS," beginning, "I had a dream—it was not all a dream," and also that other called "THE DREAM," were composed long after I offered these hints. Let the world judge between us where the imputation (if any) of wanting originality properly lies. That mine is not a singular instance of placing a guard before the door of one's literary reputation, the reader may see, if he pleases to peruse *passim* a letter published in the Courier and other newspapers, respecting Mr. Campbell's "LAST MAN."]

I HAD a hat—it was not all a hat—
Part of the brim was gone,—yet still I wore
It on, and people wondered as I passed.
Some turned to gaze—others just cast an eye
And soon withdrew it, as 'twere in contempt.

But still my hat, although so fashionless
In complement extern, had that within
Surpassing show—my head continued warm;
Being sheltered from the weather, spite of all
The want (as has been said before) of brim.

A change came o'er the colour of my hat.—
That which was black grew brown—and then men stared
With both their eyes (they stared with one before)—
—The wonder now was two-fold—and it seemed
Strange that a thing so torn and old should still
Be worn by one who might——but let that pass!
I had my reasons, which might be revealed
But for some counter-reasons, far more strong,
Which tied my tongue to silence.—Time passed on.—
Green Spring, and flowery Summer—Autumn brown,
And frosty Winter came,—and went, and came—
And still, through all the seasons of two years,
In park, in city, yea, at routs and balls
The hat was worn and borne.—Then folks grew wild
With curiosity,—and whispers rose,
And questions passed about—how one so trim
In coats, boots, pumps, gloves, trowsers, could insconce
His caput in a covering so vile.

A change came o'er the nature of my hat.—
Grease-spots appeared—but still in silence, on
I wore it—and then family and friends
Glared madly at each other.—There was one
Who said—but hold—no matter what was said—
A time may come when I——away—away—
Not till the season's ripe can I reveal
Thoughts that do lie too deep for common minds—
Till then the world shall not pluck out the heart
Of this my mystery.——When I will—I will!—
The hat was now—greasy, and old, and torn—
But torn—old—greasy—still I wore it on.

A change came o'er the business of this hat.
Women, and men, and children, scowled on me—
My company was shunned——I was alone!
None would associate with such a hat—
Friendship itself proved faithless for a hat.—
She that I loved, within whose gentle breast
I treasured up my heart, looked cold as death—
Love's fires went out—extinguished by a hat.
Of those that knew me best, some turned aside,
And scudded down dark lanes—one man did place
His finger on his nose's side, and jeered—
Others in horrid mockery laughed outright;—
Yea dogs, deceived by instinct's dubious ray,

Fixing their swart glare on my ragged hat,
Mistook me for a beggar—and they barked.
Thus women, men, friends, strangers, lover, dogs—
One thought pervaded all—it was my hat.

A change—it was the last—came o'er this hat.
For lo! at length, the circling months went round—
The period was accomplished—and one day
This tattered, brown, old, greasy coverture
(Time had endeared its vileness) was transferred
To the possession of a wandering son
Of Israel's fated race—and friends once more
Greeted my digits with the wonted squeeze:—
Once more I went my way—along—along—
And plucked no wondering gaze—the hand of scorn
With its annoying finger—men, and dogs,
Once more grew pointless, jokeless, laughless, growl-
less—
And last, not least of rescued blessings, love,—
Love smiled on me again, when I assumed
A bran new beaver of the André mould;
And then the laugh was mine, for then out came
The secret of this strangeness—'twas A BET!

TO B—— C——

A SONNET.

On what sweet story—with what gentle Muse,
Well-nigh forgotten boy, art thou enjoying
Time, and thine own thoughts hindering from annoying,
Mid dreams so tender-true, they may not choose
But all love's softness o'er the heart diffuse—
Or else, reclining on some favourite spot
Of nature's loveliness—some daisied plot—
In waking bliss dost thou thyself amuse;
Or art thou with the sistered Charites
Daintily dallying; while thy fond eyes,
Upturn'd to the white glorious galaxy,
Drink thoughts that, imp'd for flight on pinions silk,
Seek thine own lacteal fount of poesy
To prove it—more than ever—now—skim-milk?

A WORD TO THE WISE.

Taught by experience of the mind's vexations,
I 've learnt at length to scorn vain speculations,
And hold the notion that, nine times in ten,
'Twere quite as well if some wise-acre men
In this short, pleasure-fleeting life of ours,
Would spare th' expense of half the precious hours
They waste in curiously enquiring *why*
There happens to be happiness in joy.
Out on the triflers, who in learning's guise
Of crack-jaw jargon, fancy 'tis most wise
To grovel through the dark in quest of stuff
Not worth, if ever found, a pinch of snuff.
Such whence and wherefore itchers analyze,
Until they manage quite to paralize
The zest of joyousness,—while coat from coat,
(An onion's—for I don't disdain, d'ye see,
To use a savoury kitchen simile)
I say, while coat from coat, one after t'other,
They peel and strip with lots of wordy pother,

And not content to let their arbitress
Of culinary elegancies dress
The root (like folks who wisely take and eat,
And find a pleasant relish for their meat),
They put themselves, instead, into a stew,
Boiling away among the sapient few,
And lose in questions, value not a groat,
The comforts of reality—for what ?—
The vain attempt to solve a useless riddle—
The deuce a bit of kernel 's in the middle !

C i bono ? then 's the question I would put
To those who all life long their hearts keep shut,
While the blind labyrinths through which they run,
Just lead and leave them where they first begun—
With this sad difference, that the wasted hours
Have given time for all life's freshest flowers
To fade and die.—What profits it that thus,
Through many a tangled, uphill path they 're led
Away from joy, till all its bloom is fled ?
Their only gain for all their sweat and fuss
Is that a crowd of wonderers, perchance,
(Those wide-mouthed children of sheer ignorance)
With gaping looks of most inane surprise,
Deem men, so useless, yet withal so wise,
Ought surely to be hailed as prodigies—

Simply, forsooth ! because they cannot see
The depths of grave no-meaning's foolery :—
Oh ! there 's fine wisdom in obscurity !

Sure, he best claims the palm of sapiency,
Who, knowing this our being's transiency,
By dint of practical enjoyment, smothers
Such nonsense at its birth, and never bothers
His *νους* with nice distinctions ; which, when made,
Leave him, perhaps, with muddled pate, a grade
Further from truth than ever :—he 's content
To take plain things as plainly as they 're meant—
To know the bounds which sever right from wrong,
And with unclouded spirit pass along
Buoyant of heart and open to the impression
Of pleasant things—blessing the bare possession.—
Yes, give me one who, on a sunny day,
Looks up and says, " This cheerfulness is *mine*,"—
Nor thinks it worth the while to clear his way,
With abstract notions—what it is *to shine ;*
He tastes—and that 's enough,—but need not measure
By mental gage, what *is* that thing called pleasure :
Or if his lot be pain, 'tis ten to one
Some generous friend's at hand to share his groan.
But why should either fall to reasoning, *how*
Friendship can chase dull Sorrow from the brow ;

Why seek, so they but *feel* true sympathy,
To comprehend the essence of a sigh ?—
One might as well and wisely go about
With algebra to calculate the gout—
Or try t' unwreathe by intellectual prism
The texture of a twinge of rheumatism—
Or, for some fancied truth's exalted sake,
Extract the cube-root of the stomach-ache.

No, no ! away—this life is far too short
To vex its hours in questions of this sort ;
But, if there 's joy, why let 's rejoice we 've won it,
And lose no time to lay our fingers on it :
And when at times our happier feelings leave us,
'Tis better bear our sorrows as we can,
Than lengthen them by vain attempts to scan
The hidden properties of all that 's grievous.

* * * *

There was a time I suffered in this kind,
Holding, for instance, him the truly wise
Who, for some carking query of the mind,
Could not be satisfied that eyes were eyes ;
But scorned the clear fruition of heaven's light,
Without some senseless quibbles about vision
And idle speculations upon sight,—
Which now, thanks be ! I hold in some derision.

Yea, the time was, when many a pleasant sound
Lost half its loveliness—for I had found
That sound, in fact, would be no sound at all,
Were there no tympanums on which to fall:
So music underwent a distillation,
And fumed away in mental perspiration.
But, hence! begone!—I care not now, not I,
How a tuned soul drinks in pure harmony—
The love of melody 's enough for me,
And music is a sweet reality.

But truth forbid, that any should decry
That heaven-descended, true philosophy,
Which, with the patience of investigation,
Would lead man back as near to his prime station
As man may go.—The labour of all learning
Now deemed abstruse, seems only a returning—
A struggling backward along vistas, dark
Or scantly lighted by a glimmering spark,—
A weary searching after what hath not
Than truth already in our scope, one jot
Less of inherent simpleness;—for what
Are all our tedious processes of knowledge,
The midnight waste of time and oil at college,
The fret, the wreck of health,—all that the wise
Have learned by poor comparison to prize,

But lame attempts to scale, or to supply,
By art, the wings by which we fain would fly
At higher posts than man, in daily life,
Holds in possession—yet are not more rife
Than they in wonders: for, when one has passed
All common limits—lo, on what a vast
High pinnacle Sir Wisdom stands at last!
The utmost that is done, is but to gain
A gleam to show the darkness—to obtain
A meagre hint of light, that scarce may give
Glimpses of things, which, if th' intuitive
Power of mind were in us, would but be
Ranked with each homelier, simple entity,
Since none can justly think, and not confess
That knowledge is but utter simpleness.

Thus, all the wisdom man has power to reach,
So next to nothing, ought methinks to teach
Humility—the rather that the fame
In all that gains a man a sounding name
For sciences and wisdom, is—to say
That he has striven in a certain way
To learn, with labour, things which haply are
Easy as eyesight in some brighter star

Than this dim earth :—and even at the best,
When all that can be gathered is possessed,
Where and for what 's the mighty ground of pride,
In ignorance so little modified
That he whom Delphi's oracle once named
The wisest of mankind, himself proclaimed
This, as the lesson which his wisdom taught,
That all his knowledge was—that he knew nought ?

Yet, as is said before, when there are true,
Good, wise philosophers, who 're humble too—
Unswayed by prejudice—bent to unravel
Creation's mysteries,—yet not to travel
Through fanciful inclosures where they gain
Notions as proud and useless as they 're vain,—.
I say that such, and only such enquirers
Deserve, in their minute research, admirers :
For only where minuteness strives to find
Some goodly relics of more perfect mind
Are metaphysics useful—so I rate 'em,
But for their strange conundrums—how I hate 'em !

Voltaire, with his acutish cleverness,
Touches this matter off with much address.

He who, to serve his turn, could either be
The joke or prop of false philosophy,
Once, in his humour to be quizzical,
Laughed out at all that 's metaphysical,
And from a minuet's mazy wanderings
A just comparison thus aptly brings.
" Well done, good folks, you 've led a pretty dance,
And laboured hard your pleasures to enhance ;
But tell me, pray—and that 's the deuce of it,—
Now all is over—what 's the use of it ?
Bows—curt'sies—sinks—and slides, and dips, and graces
Have brought ye all at last—back to your places,—
Your intricate meanderings are done,
And now I find ye—just where ye begun !"

Eagle and ape of Ferney !—here I must
For once acknowledge that your quiz is just ;
Then hence, for ever, bootless speculations,—
I 've had my *quantum suff.* of such vexations !

MAY-DAY SONG.

I 've heard that air before.—PEAKE.

I.

See, lovely May resumes her reign,
The Graces follow in her train,—
Her breath of balm, her fragrant tread
Bring odours to each flowery bed.
The bells are ringing—
The birds are singing
To hail the dawn of lovely May;—
Come mingle—mingle in the lay
That welcomes in our holiday!

CHORUS.

We join, we join the grateful lay
That welcomes in the merry May!

II.

In all her beauty see her rise—
Behold, her sun is in the skies—
On every side she greets the eye
With plenty's promise bounteously.

The birds are singing
And bells are ringing—
Hark to the cheerful roundelay!—
And light of heart, and blithe and gay
Let 's carol in the lovely May!

CHORUS.

Hail, jocund season—happy day—
Oh, welcome merry, merry May!

THE MAIDEN'S KNELL.

I.

One fresh and lovely morning,
A maiden sweet as May
Was singing like one who never
Might know a darker day :—
Yea, morns might break less brightly,
Black clouds might gather near,
Yet that bosom feel no darkness,
For still the sun shone there.

II.

But, ah ! life's darkest shadows
Soon fell on her young heart's pride—
For love's fair flower was blighted,
And the maiden drooped and died.
And, lastnight, as we pass'd along,
We heard the dismal bell
Send forth a dreary summons—
It tolled the Maiden's knell.*

* These lines were written for an Opera, with a view to their adaptation to a fine piece of harmony, well known by the ludicrous name of the "Derbyshire Ram," a Glee. The adaptation would ask the hand of a Bishop to bless a passage or two into somewhat of a gentler grace.

A LAMENT.

(*An old image in a new dress.*)*

FROM A MUSICAL DRAMA WRITTEN SOME YEARS AGO.

Ye woods that wail whenas the breeze
Of Autumn strews your leaves around ;
A few short months and ye 'll be seen
Smiling once more in leafy green—
But, lo ! yond aged forest-trees
That lie uprooted on the ground—
Their fate reminds me of my own—
For never more,—oh never—
That bosom feels returning spring,
Whose dearest hold of earth is gone—
And nought again can blitheness bring
To cheer my heart—for ever !

* See Burns's Lament for James, Earl of Glencairn.

THE BROTHERS.

"For we were nurst upon the self-same hill."
MILTON.

No garland now—no wreath of bay,
Freaked out with flaunting flowers
To shame the melancholy lay
That dwells on perished hours:
A chaplet green as lovely spring
Would mock the bosom's sorrowing;
And ah, when eyes with grief are wet,
They seek not beauty's coronet.
Nor cypress, nor funereal yew
Be on my temples bound;—
Alas! I want their leaves to strew
With these sad hands the ground.
No wreaths!—no garlands!—bright ones now
But ill would suit a gloomy brow,
And, Nature's dreary emblems, ye
Are fitliest scattered mournfully!

* * * He stood beside
The grave of one who early died—

His thoughts were with the silent dead,
And days for ever fled!

* * * *

In life's fair spring they two had strayed,—
Through frolic May together played,—
Together cropped the summer flowers,—
And, heart to heart, in riper hours,
Had shared each other's hopes and fears,
Each other's joys—each other's tears;—
Their race, the same—their pride, to be
Two scions of an honoured tree—
The last, the nearest in their birth:—
But now one heart has ceased to beat—
The doom is sealed—and all is o'er—
The friends, the brothers—they must meet
Upon the glorious face of earth,
In mutual consciousness no more.

* * * *

He stood—he gazed:—his troubled brow
Was storied deep with thoughts; and now
Strange wishes sprang to birth—he fain
Would call the dead to life again—
If 'twere but for his own sad sake,
Just that his tear-dimmed eyes might take

One look—one fond, short, parting look—
(It was denied, what time death shook
His dart, and dealt that fatal blow
Which laid a friend so low)—
He longed to whisper one poor word,
(Ah! will it ever now be heard?)
That, though far-off in Fate's dark hour,
Space held o'er love no weakening power—
But that his early bosom-friend
So loved through life was cherished to the end!
Alas! he came too late to watch
The last dread struggles made with death—
And envious Fate let strangers catch
His own true friend's expiring breath.—
No solace had he—save that one,
With sorrow kindred to his own,
(But with a wisdom purged from leaven,
To teach how grief should look to heaven)
Was his fond partner in the last
Sad, solemn, close!—and now, 'tis past—
His friend is laid in death's long sleep,
And he is left to weep.———

. . . . . .

There as he stood—he thought of times
When he could chase light griefs with rhymes:

He deemed even now some solemn verse
Might fitly deck a sable herse :
But 'twas a moment's idle dream
That vanished like the lightning's gleam—
(A meteor-flit o'er darkness tnrown,
A less than instant--here—and gone ;)
For there are woes too deep to be
Soothed by an earthly minstrelsy ;
And, when he sought within, he found
No string to give a tuneful sound.
Sorrows that crush the heart are dumb—
And forth from his no words would come
But what seemed broken too, and fell
Dreary as any knell--
" My brother—friend—farewell—farewell !"

Thus lorn--his mind set all on death,
And those few gasps of struggling breath
By men called life ; (for now, alas !
He had been taught how vain it was)—
With thoughts so drear—and in his eye
Graves with their cold reality,--
And round him stones on which he read
Memorials of the gathered dead--

While not a spot whereon he trod
In that sepulchral resting-place
But seemed a relic—every sod
Some remnant of the human race;
What marvel that his musings ran
Upon the common fate of man—
Musings shaped out in silent thought,
Which, now and then, from habit caught
Sensations of responsive sound:
Until at length his bosom found
A heavy birth of bitterness
Off-lifted thus in harsh, uncouth,
And rugged words, which not the less
Of want of tune were words of truth.
Doleful they were—and though they had
Their echo in a spirit sad,
They were not utterance of his own peculiar grief,
Yet still they brought relief,
Dwelling upon the share man-mortals have
In life, pain, death, and the insatiate grave,
And what might follow—which the soul descries
When brooding on its awful destinies.

* * * *

Man lives the lord of all creation else;
Yet with that sentient faculty of soul

Which, joining mental to the corporal pang,
In this most sad inheritance of woe,
But doubles misery! Alas! this life—
This passage onwards to the general doom
Of a great execution—this rough road
With, here and there, a flower to mock our hearts—
What were it, if no gracious hope were near
To whisper thus, and solve the mystery,—
That life below is but our being's morn,
A longer or a shorter wakening
Into eternity?—Man sure would be
The wretched'st being of a wretched world,
Were all his prospects bounded by its span;
Were there no intimations of a land
Springing with treasures of unmingled joy,
In realms beyond this desert and this grave.

Look round and see what, but for this, were man.
Sense's pale victim—or, in happiest state,
A pampered morsel for the monster earth
To feed upon.—Ev'n now my tread is on
The common glutting-place:—behold—and read—
There, where the willow hangs its mournful head
Over a cherished spot, a tale is told
Of flowrets withered in their budding spring.

And here, how fond a grief records a son,
His parent's joy, the darling of all hearts,
In summer's pride and lustihood struck down.
Yes, thus it is—this were a boasted life,
If this, indeed, were all. Here we behold—
Ev'n where no startling deed of fate displays
The sad reversal of a natural lot
In young, untimely death—here we behold
How generations push each other out
Into blank nothingness—*if* this were all.
Age follows age, in sighs, and moans, and tears,
To walk the appointed thorny path, that lies
Between the cradle and the sepulchre ;—
Each seeming born to dig the former's grave,
Then drop to graves that new ones dig for them.
Sons follow sons, in mournful right of birth,
To raise the tombs of those that gave them breath.
We only live to weep for severed loves—
Passing through many deaths in those that die ;
Then die, are mourned, and in our turns forgot.

* * * *

Why art thou proud, oh man—since thou must be,
Ere long, the tenant of that narrow house—
Where, all distinctions of this life being o'er,
High-crested glory sleeps upon a sod,

The neighbouring sod that pillows poverty.
Where now 's the railing tongue—the heart of scorn
Which sovereign Reason's self could ne'er control ?
Stopped with one little, little clod of earth—
What here remains of pomp and pride and power ?
A mouldering mass of undistinguished dust.

* * * *

Lo ! bitter mockery of human pride,
That nature holds no sympathy with woe—
On yonder grave of one who lately died,
Observe, already, how those daisies blow.
Corruption's semblance is no longer seen ;—
Above, the unchecked freshness of the spring
O'erspreads decay with loveliness and green,—
Beneath, the worms are busy banquetting.
Yet read aright this lesson, and we see
A fair suggestion of our destiny—
Faith's finger pointing from the ghastly tomb
Towards the garden of a future bloom.

* * * *

Yes, in the dark—oh ! in the dark,
There is a gleam of light,
And, on the world's rough waves, an ark
To bless the straining sight.

And happy he, who still hath found
In every mouldering plot of ground
That hides a stranger or a friend,
A warning for his end !

* * * *

Enough ! enough ! it is enough to know
Pure bliss was ne'er a denizen below—
Man's worldly being, from his very birth,
Is sorrow—and he fain must kiss the rod.
Joy is but as a shadow cast on earth—
Its substance is in heaven—the light is God !

THE MONUMENT.

From Vincent Bourne's lines, 'In statuam sepulchralem infantis dormientis,' beginning,

"Infans venuste—qui sacros dulces agens
In hoc sopores marmore—"

Beautiful child! so free from fault and fear,
Lying in sweet sleep's quiet semblance here;
Thy loveliness inspired the sculptor's hand
To spread a living influence—to warm,
As with the power of the Promethean wand,
And vivify the stone's cold lifeless form
With thine own look of gently breathing sleep,
O'er which no evil thoughts their vigils keep.
Oh, may this imaged slumber be a token—
Balming our hearts—of that pure, calm, unbroken
And heavenly peace, never to be expressed
By art or artist,—that eternal rest
Of angel-innocence -the last—the best!

THE CAPTIVE USURPER.

(On Napoleon Buonaparte, as he appeared on board his Majesty's Ship the Bellerophon, in Plymouth Sound, before his banishment to Saint Helena, in August 1815.)

> "A cut-purse of the empire ———————
> That from the shelf the precious diadem stole."
> SHAKSPEARE.

AND is it come to this?—is this the man
Who through the earth war's lightning hurled?
Is here his swoln ambition's widest span,
Whose nod could awe a trembling world?
Lo! here ye potentates of earth,
That crush by might or curb by birth—
Ambition's readiest tools—how tyrants end:—
Hemmed in by hated foes he stands forlorn,
Almost alone—too sure without a friend,—
Save such—so called—who sink to nought, if still
They be not minion-creatures of his will—
Yes, there Napoleon stands—the mark of scorn
To thousands as they gaze and cry
Behold the end of Tyranny!

Within that breast what fiendish spirits dwell,
There all is joyless restlessness and care—
No jocund laugh—no look of peace may tell—
So fierce the tortures of an inward hell—
That aught of happiness is ever there.
The Desert blast, with hot and poisoned breath,
Shall cease to sear that bosom—never—never—
Gales of the wintered North, full-fraught with death
Shall blight with icy memory for ever!—
Torn down from high unholy state,
Indignant nations spare his life,
That now the maddening whirl is o'er,
The hurrying, thronging thoughts of strife,
He may in vacancy deplore
His evil deeds—and ruminate
Where he can vex the war-tired world no more.
There, round about his haunted bed,
In sad array his myriad-dead,
Breathing cold Moscow's storms and Jaffa's sighs,
Shall dimly stalk before his aching eyes—
While from the ground
Shrieks of pale Murder evermore shall sound,
And cries of severed loves—of friendships rent—
Scare him to keen, unpitied punishment!

Then Palm—D'Enghein——Hah! see—the murderer
smiles!
And *is* that heart at rest—no fierce recoil
Of scorpion thoughts?—so filled with fraud and guiles,
So stained with guiltless blood—can this man *smile*?

Peace—peace!—such smile shall never reach his eyes;*
'Tis but the cunning trick of falsest art—
That bids the mouth put on that look of lies
To hide the rankling tortures of his heart.

Yes, amid pangs that he must still endure—
Mid torturing thoughts that *he* can never cure—
With "none to bless him, none whom he can bless,"
That smile is but a mock of happiness.

Ill man of blood—away!—what dost thou here?
Hence to thy lonely isle, and bear with thee
Horror and fang'd Remorse and pallid Fear,
Till Death's black hour shall set thy body free.

Yet ere the all-inevitable blow
Of human fate at length shall lay thee low—
Ere all that 's left of mad ambition's lust
Be—Earth to its Earth—Ashes—Dust to Dust;

* "*And none can trace that laughter to his eye.*"—LARA.
See Eastlake's picture, or the print taken from it.

Still, if thou hop'st, even thou, to be forgiven,
Kneel in the dust—lift up thy hands and pray—
Weep with bowed heart in penitence to heaven,
And wash with bitterest tears thy stains away.
Think upon Him whose meekness, shaming pride,
Showed him the lowliest though of all the head ;—
Think upon Him—life's arbiter—who died
And made the blood of one for millions shed
A sacrifice sufficing to atone
Ev'n for the blood of millions shed for one !
Lay hold on mercy's promise—it can bless
To balm each contrite tear-drop's bitterness.
Haply a pardon is in store for thee—
Sink, proud one, sink, and learn humility !

* * * * *

He 's gone ! and lo ! fled with him ruthless WAR,—
With him dispersed the gloomy shades of night,
And at the setting of his bloody star
The Sun of PEACE has risen upon our sight!

NIGHT.

(Some of the following lines, written on a particular occasion, have appeared elsewhere: the whole together forms an episodical portion of an unpublished poem, the scene of which is Britain in its early days.)

"The Queen of the South shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation."

Old Time, that speeds with never-halting pace,
Now led the dusky evening into night;
Ev'n such a night of such pure loveliness,
Mingling ineffably with majesty,
As this wherein his soul who fondly chaunts
Tales of a far-gone day (following high thoughts
Which, born of beauty, sink into his heart
Each after each) now reels with gushing draughts
Of transport,—dumb, or only eloquent
In one word—beautiful! Oh, I have gazed
On nature's graces with a panting breast
Which day by day ran o'er; and I have stood
High in the mountain-air and hugged myself
To Freedom's freshest thoughts; and I have loved
To mark where ocean's surges lash the shore,

How the great voice of waters in the deep
Could thrill me into awe; and I have felt
Tears which have failed to swell for tenderness
Gush at the grandeur of the storm. All these
Have been my deep delights;—but now to walk
On such a night as this—to hear remote
The hum of busy cities—whilst around
Far, near, in sky, in earth, and every where
All that I see, or know, or feel, seems made
Of beauty,—oh! the very inmost sense
Losing each varied feeling in the one,
One gentler ecstasy that kindles there,
Is tuned to such delicious sympathy
With thoughts of love and heaven, that every sound
Breathing from out the hill, the grove, the plain,
The waters bubbling, and the voice of trees,
Sink with a holier softness on the soul
Like music with an emphasis of God!

And oh! how beautiful it is to gaze
Upon the blaze of rolling worlds on high—
To view the countless company of stars,
As night advances, gleam with all their fires—
Studding the wide-spread curtain of the sky
Far as the eye can reach with sprinkled gold

And living gems in various figures wrought.
Here is a sight might teach the earth's proud fool
To search within,—and 'mid this infinite
Of starry worlds, shrink at his littleness;
Here is a sight to soothe the humble heart
Into a peaceful awe of mightiness,
And 'mid this infinite of starry worlds
Exalt his soul to that pervading power
Which sees and knows and regulates the whole.*

Behold, thou blind of soul, this glorious scene
With contemplation's eye:—hear, oh ye deaf!
On whom the wonders of the day are lost,
The grand, the silent eloquence of night.
Draw near, ye proud! whose hearts a plant—a flower—
An insect's form—man's body—or man's mind,
With all earth's miracles have never taught
To bow before the blessings of that One
Whose gifts exuberant ye taste yet scorn;—
Cold, apathetic Pyrrhos of our day—
Morbid excrescences on beauty's cheek—
Come now and view yond heaven's resplendent host
Fulfilling all their settled course and motion,—

* "That pois'd, impels, and rules the steady whole."
THOMSON.

Held in unbuoyant space by His great laws
Of counter yet co-operant gravitation
With admirablest government. Approach!—
Enter the temple of the silent night,
Whose shrine is glorious nature,—and bend low—
While the bright myriad of consenting suns
That light the fields of ether, write the name
Of God—Majestic—Vast—Magnificent—
In radiant characters along the sky!

Or, if a milder spell may charm—behold,
Where from the shade of yonder fleecy cloud
(Whose feathery whiteness on the blue expanse
Rests, not a blemish but a loveliness,
Even as that "mole cinque-spotted" on the breast
Of beauty, sung by Nature's darling child*)
The Queen of Night, unveiling her bright face,
Has dimm'd the starry lights, and wins her way
In quiet grace along the trackless skies.
Pale, fair, and silently she spreads her light,
Silvering the ground with ineffectual beams;

* On her left breast
A mole cinque-spotted—like the crimson drops
I' th' bottom of a cowslip.
CYMBELINE.

Or, shining through the opening foliature
Of darksome woods, enlivens half the gloom
That reigned with melancholy silence there.

Oh, 'tis among the thrilling things of life—
One of the highest feastings of the soul—
To feel our rising thoughts o'erleap themselves,
Breathless with reaching at immensity!
Or, when all sounds of day have died away,
To listen at the silence dizzily,
Till the rapt fancy tunes the very hush
Into mysterious voices whispering round
Through all his wondrous works—THE DEITY!

But this is fond.—Long centuries have passed—
Ages that plead in wonders have rolled by,
And yet there are who triumph in their scorn.
My call is vain!——SPIRIT OF OTHER DAYS!
Upon my sight ev'n now thine awful form
Doth seem to rise, and that dim majesty
Finds thee a name—Spirit of other days!
Thou passest on before me, and thine hand
Bears the historic scroll of ages past—

Ages whose *unpierced darkness* pitieth those
To whom the heavenly choir in Bethlehem,
Chaunting glad tidings in the Highest name,
Unveil'd a purer light:—yet even now,
Thence, where that finger points,—a glorious ray,
A gleam of brightness from the nighted page
Bursts on the sense—and with a beam so clear
As well may turn our splendours into shade!
I see thy silent triumphing—that smile
Retorting pity—*might* I hear a voice
Beyond that speaking look—some solemn 'hest?—
Away—the vision 's past—'twas but a thought.
Yet were that shadowy form more palpable—
Had it a tongue, and voice, and eloquence—
How might it cry—"Woe, woe to proud mankind!
List, son of earth! and hearing, shrink for shame,
That in your blazon of celestial light
Lurk darker souls than darker ages knew.
Claims he your pity, and is nighted more
Who in dusk twilight hails the coming dawn
And hastens to the rising—or that fool,
Who owning brighter radiance than the sun's,
Yet blinds himself to stumble in the dark,

And grovelling lower than a heathen did
In his unlighten'd day of ignorance,
Feels less of God than pagan Socrates!" *

Oh, sage of Athens! mankind's, virtue's friend—
Faint shadower out of holier things to come,—
Thy bright exemplar might instruct our hearts
In more than thine intelligence of God!
Might we but mark thy mild demeanour now,
As when the scurrile scoffings of the crowd
Called up one smile in pity—and no more,—
Or see thy gracious figure bent with age,†
Ev'n as thou stood'st before the accuser's bar—
Meekly yet firm—modest yet unabashed—

* I allow the Spirit of other days to call this shade from The Clouds, the rather that it has been the fashion of late to throw dirt on the memory of this illustrious sage. After all that has been said against him, I must confess that my heart still clings fondly to the first pure notion it conceived of his character; a notion so agreeable, that I am willing to retain it for (as I would fain think) a real, or, at the worst, an imaginary example of goodness in a dark age.

† Socrates, as the reader knows, was rather of the ugliest—for a philosopher; but *n'importe*—MENS CUJUSQUE, says Cicero, IS EST QUISQUE. We see "Othello's visage in his mind."

Truth's dauntless champion though condemned to die—
Then follow thee to prison, and behold
The calm and beautiful magnificence
Of chainless mind—the almost Christian grace
With which, forgiving all thine enemies,
Thou drank'st the cup of bane and bitterness
To fall a martyr of a new-born faith
Whose infant whispers had aroused thy soul;
How might the lesson shame us!—But no more—
Fain I resume the shell whose sounds may waft
My willing spirit o'er the lapse of years
To Britain's ancient scenes,—to image there
A night of loveliness—a night like this!

THE PENITENT.

A Scene.

THE PASTOR MÜLLER.—ALBERT.

ALBERT.

TRUE, good old man, I feel that you are right.
O, my father!—for so I may call one
Whose creed gives life—your's is no rugged, steep,
And rough theology: there 's comfort in it—
Comfort for him who *can* be comforted:
And my heart thanks you for such gentle words
With all the fervor that one dying can.
And yet—for *me*—

MÜLLER.

Say on, my son, say on—
'Twill ease your heart to speak contrition's words,
If, as I deem, you *are* a penitent,
Turning to him who will not cast thee out.

ALBERT.

Yes; but my life—my life;—each thought of that
Rebukes the very hope of penitence.

That man twice lives his time, whose retrospect
Of other days is on a well-spent life:*
Yea; the pure memory of hours gone by,
Even mid the racking tortures of disease,
Is present joy. It is not so with me:—
To me, remembrance is a gloomy tale
Of wasted talents and perverted sense.
My life hath darkly passed. From my youth up,
Cursed with a questioning and doubting spirit,
I deemed my thoughts could fathom every thing;
And, wanting that humility of soul
Which knows how nothing man is of himself,
With overweening pride I laughed to scorn
Doctrines which shrunk my wisdom into nought:
Yea—spurned what now I feel was sent from heaven;—
Spurned it—because I hated humbleness.

MULLER.

But that is past, and better is behind—
Since now, at length, your heart accepts the truth,
And feels 'twas sent from heaven.

ALBERT.

It does; and yet,
Father, for almost five and thirty years,

* ——————hoc est
Vivere bis, vitâ posse priore frui.—*Martial.*

Since I knew reason first, my heart hath been
Harden'd in pride : the pride that harden'd me
Made sport of crime—and now 'tis terrible
To think—weak as I am—thought maddens me.—
What ruined angels once, thus ruined me—
Pride that at first unlocked the doors of hell—
Pride was the syren song which lured me on,
And drew me to my fate. When Satan fell—

MULLER.

Fond man, forbear ; there 's folly in the heart
Which loves to dally with a thought like this,
Giving it breath because it is eloquent.
Last night I warned you—prithee, then, forbear.

ALBERT.

Nay, let me speak : a dying man tells truth ;
And the few hours before I pass away
To the dark silent grave, I fain would make—
But what avails it now ? I say again,
To such a pitch of reasoning pride I soared,
In impious scoffs at wisdom infinite,
That had it been my fate to dwell in heaven
What time those spirits fell—there had I striven
Among the ranks of darkened Seraphim
To be what ever I have been on earth,

Not second, but the first in haughtiness.
O, I could tell a tale;—and yet I will not
Do your meek faith that violence—but this
I 'll speak—and, as I speak it, tremble
To think I speak but truth—that had it been
Ev'n as I said, my fate to dwell in heaven
What time those spirits fell, there had I striven
First in the ranks of darkened Seraphim:
Not Lucifer, but I had led them on,
And Albert clean o'ertopped the Prince of those
Who sought to shake The Highest on his throne!—
And now—what am I?—lost, for ever lost
Unless He pardon—whom I dare not name.

MULLER.

You "*dare* not name"—there 's comfort in that fear.
To feel the want of help—and, feeling that,
To know ourselves unworthy utterly
Save for the sake of One——trust me, such fear
Partakes the nature of a blessed hope.

ALBERT.

Ah! reverend man, you bear your faculties
So meekly that you cannot choose but comfort:
Not like too many of your holy calling,
Who throw a gulf impassable between

Wretches like me and heaven—a fearful gulf—
A dreadful gulf—the gulf of destiny;
Which not to credit seems impossible,
Yet to believe is to surrender hope—
And with that loss of hope to shift the charge
Of vice from off ourselves, yet still to feel
A whirl of vague conjectures—till the mind,
Unequal to resolve its questionings
Of power that seems both weak and infinite,
Is lost within a labyrinthine maze
And takes its last blank refuge in despair.
Omnipotence urging a puny war
With creatures of its will!—foredooming all,
And yet not all to good!—Omnipotence
Submitting to be thwarted by weak man!
Omnipotence—and yet allowing ill!
Partial Omnipotence! 'tis that astounds
The faculties; so did it mine for years.
I thought—and thought—and thought it o'er and o'er:
Thought drove out thought unsatisfied, until
A cold, uninterested, cheerless doubt
Benumbed the senses into apathy
And utter recklessness of every thing.—
And this the close—it can't be, yet it must!

MULLER.

And who may fathom it? Reason hath bounds;—
And surelier might we think with human strength
To do a giant's work—better aspire
To grasp the farthest stars—likelier expect
Success in tasking our dull limited sight
To pierce beyond its ken, than build our hope
On Reason's finding out what 's Infinite.
It is enough to know that Evil is—
Our inmost hearts bear witness to that truth—
But *wherefore* 'tis not ours to understand,
Till the Unerring vindicates Himself.
My son, 'tis dangerous in man to meddle
With such high subjects as that evil thrives
Against foreknowing Power, or why that Power
Permits distinction; yet the messengers
Of Truth are charged to give it utterance.

ALBERT.

Then prithee speak of it; methinks, from you
It might come softened. I am humbled now—
Nor would I cope in wordy argument
With purer knowledge: speak of it, I pray;
It may be comfort to my passing soul.

MULLER.

Man's duty and the purposes of heaven
Are each from each distinct: one is all plain;
The other is for faith, not fathoming.
It cannot be, my son, it cannot be
But that in God's all-knowledge we are born
Each with a changeless lot, and yet with wills
Acting in ways past human finding out,
Free to discriminate what 's right—what 's wrong:
How otherwise could judgment e'er be just;
Since virtue were not virtue, vice not vice,
If but the effects of fixed necessity.
The rock that 's oftenest split upon is this—
That man, with his proud mind, would rather be
Shocked and confounded into faithlessness
Than, what were fittest—own humility.
We set an idol up, and call it Thought,
Which our fond notions fancy limitless,
Only because, not being limitless,
It fails to judge beyond its pigmy range.
Must every thing that *seems* impossible
Be therefore so? 'Tis better to believe
That divine purpose and contingency
Are not irreconcilable, than feel

Obdurate in what derogates from God.
We trust in error as a perfect guide;
We make our folly wisdom's measurement,
And calculate eternity by time.
The child to whom all things seem wonderful
Dreams not that years will make the wonders cease.
Then why not so in what relates to time?—
Time is the childhood of Eternity.
But, for this doctrine which you touched upon
As others *have* done—take thus much from me—
The humbly righteous cannot but be safe:
And trust me, son, 'tis pregnant with most sweet
Comfort to holiness—its firmest prop:—
Ev'n thus.—I deem the Great Omniscient
Predestines all things;—therefore, *to obey*
Must also be one link of many links
In the vast chain of never-changed decrees;
And virtue, flowing from his love, the test,
The evidence of trust within ourselves,
When our predestination is for heaven.

ALBERT.

Alas! then, where am I, who ne'er could feel
Such evidence of love—such holy trust?

MULLER.

It were presumptuous to limit mercy—
Presumptuous to say 't is not for thee.
O, 'twere presumption to the very height
To measure mercy by our earthly span
Of minutes, hours, years, or centuries—
For who may say, that Being in whose sight
Ten thousand ages are as yesterday,
May not, within the everlasting scope
Of His eternal Eye, read graciously,
In one brief moment of sincerity,
What might be from what is. All is a gift—
Not less to those who toil throughout the day,
Than for the labourer of the eleventh hour.

ALBERT.

Ah, father—'t is the midnight hour with me *—
An hour of darkness past the hours of work.
I know it, and I speak it—yet can feel
Only that I 've a soul insensible
To aught but bare acknowledgment : dark words
Just frown as they pass by—they pierce it not—

* I am aware of the different mode of reckoning the hours by us now and by the Jews of old, but was unwilling to lose the allusion to our midnight hour as next to the eleventh. The eleventh hour was the same as our five in the afternoon.

And yet I marvel not that truth should find
A heart, so long impenetrable,—tough.

MULLER.

Be comforted, my son :—I have marked well
For many days, since sickness fell upon thee,
The workings of your soul; and now I dare,
In all the humbleness of one entrusted
To bear good tidings, whisper peace to *thee* :—
For many days I 've marked in many tears
That fell upon that Book beneath your pillow,
More gratefulness than terror, when the page
Told how the King of Israel, when he fell
And felt the depth of sin, was raised again—
That showed the Prodigal in his new robes
Of righteousness—that spoke of Mary's fault
And its forgiveness—that offered pardon
To chief of sinners—

ALBERT.

I am the chief
Of all that ever sinned.

MULLER.

All men are guilty.
The purest man that lives, or ever lived
Simply as man, like thee requires pardon—

Or else what needed such a sacrifice
As His who made atonement for mankind ?
O, think of that, my son,—and above all
Remember—He who made that sacrifice
Had *love* enough to make that sacrifice!—
Is there no comfort in a thought of love
Which surely could not lightly hold a race
Deemed not unworthy of so vast a price ?
Son, there 's no peril that can equal his
Who sinks his soul in terrors that absorb
The hope of that great record " God is Love."
'Tis perilous beyond all else to hold
Notions unworthy of the Deity.

ALBERT.

But they are passed away : I hold not such.
I am content to think that such things are
Beyond our scrutiny—to yield my thought
That I could paint a heaven of mine own
Fairer than that is taught us—it is gone ;
And I am numbered with the humble ones
Who wait, unquestioning, the day to come.
Bear with me—yes, you will, you do. Perchance
'Twas foolish thus in my extremity
To start a school-point. What is it to me ?

Destiny—destiny—what is 't to me ?
For not the dread of pain—body, or soul, or both—
The worst of what may come, wrings me with half
The pangs which rankle here. Love—love despised—
Makes all my weight of grief. If I have wept,—
If I have groaned,—no craven fear did prompt
The tear, the utterance;—but that love so great
As that your charity hath taught my heart—
That love so vast has been rejected,—scorned.
Oh, if such grief, mixed with one fluttering thought
Which lights even now, be penitence——Speak to me,
Speak—'tis gone—and 'twas a vision—gone.

MULLER.

Alas! he changes fast: that look—that look—
I know it well; 'tis death. Peace to his soul!
Ah! he revives!—Look up, my son, look up!

ALBERT.

Where am I? methought, strange voices—no, no!
'Twas that kind voice: oh! many thanks. That pang
Was deep indeed—'tis past, and now all 's rest—
Quiet, cold quiet; the last dreadful pang
Hath left me easy: with the body's pain,
Clouds move from off my heart. I see it now,
A ray shines through the gloom of night—ev'n now
The light breaks in upon my soul—'tis like
Day newly risen: love and truth are met—

And mercy—here—here.——O, my kind pastor,
Come nearer—nearer still. My senses fail;
I feel that I am going——where? Father
Of Mercy, into thy hands ———————
———————— Be near me still——
Speak to me, venerable man.——I see
Thee not: speak to me ————————
Whisper—still whisper in my dying ear
The name of Him who died—yes, died for *me*:—
In my last moment, whisper but that name,
And 'twill be peace ————————————.

MULLER.

He 's parting now.

———————————————

I 'll do his bidding, so that blessed name
May mix itself with his expiring breath—

———————————————————

———————He 's gone, and gone in peace.*

* If this dialogue had been altogether imaginary, the arguments on both sides would have taken a wider range: as it is, the subject is confined to the limits which belonged to the circumstances from which it took its rise.

A PROPHECY.

'Tis coming now! it rises on the eye
Which Poesy puts on of Prophecy—
The time is terribly approaching, when
On earth its reign—Diabolism's reign
Shall be resumed!—Abhorred hour,
By whose swart lamp methinks I see
The fiend, in all his potency,
Shaking the sceptre of his power
Over a blinded world. His dreadful robe
Of sovereignty shall overshade the globe
With thrice Cimmerian gloom—which for a while
Fool man shall love like light, hailing it with a smile.

But lo, the beam of the poet's eye
Rests with a brighter prophecy
On the not then far future—for even now
The seeds are sown of promise that shall grow
Anon to ripeness—yea, a glorious ray,
Cloud-covered now, shall brighten into day.

Hope looks through darkness—for the shroud of night,
When stars are gone,
And the moon is down,
Is blackest just before the morning's light.

Ho—every near and distant land—
A crisis is at hand!
And the day will come—
The day of Evil's doom;
When, with its dark security high-blown,
The baleful Power shall mount its transient throne,—
Just to be briefly seen, and felt, and cursed, and gone!

Of its own fulness shall the Evil die;
Its own infernal fulness shall o'erbloat
Its vileness ev'n to bursting;* and the eye
Of man, shut up so long, shall lose the mote
When the consummate glare of banefulness
Shall force the senseless orb to vision.—Yes,

* To those who are in the habit of marking the signs of the times, evil principle never perhaps appeared with so threatening an aspect as it does in the present day. It seems, in spite of the good which is actively stirring, as if it would rapidly attain that height above which it cannot go, and where therefore to move at all must be to fall. Like a bubble of foul smoke, whose inward filth imparts its colour to the surface, it takes the un-

A crisis is at hand:
The deeds a-doing now shall show the world
That dreadful spirit, deep fathoms down *self*-hurled
From its fell domination—there to lie
A suicidal scarecrow to impiety,
Never to rise again—oh! never, never!
Beautiful moment! this the long vexed earth
Shall see at length—moment of heavenly birth,
When Virtue, robed in loveliness again,
With shouts of triumph shall resume *her* reign;
When grateful man, the victim then no more
Of devilish phantasy,
Shall strive not how "to question, but adore;"
And all the meek in all the earth shall be
Held with a band of love which nought can sever,
And radiant Truth shine forth for ever and for ever!

wary eye by a smooth and glossy outside. As it distends, however, the film, growing thinner and thinner, betrays the impurity within:—by and by it will burst only to stink in the nostrils of those who have been deceived by its speciousness. I will not mention by name those instruments of evil which abound in our times—this allusion being direct enough for all to whom it need be intelligible.

SONNET.

TO ————, A YOUNG WIDOW, MOURNING AMID ACCUMULATED AFFLICTIONS WITH A BEAUTIFUL RESIGNATION.

> More sweet than health's fresh bloom the wan hue seemed
> That sat upon her cheek. Mrs. TIGHE'S PSYCHE.

THE storm hath been with thee, thou desolate one!
We saw the murky clouds of sorrow lower,
And the best brightness of the happiest hour
That ever sparkled in life's orient sun
Quenched in thy heart, thou sweet and desolate one!
Yet mid the crush of joys new-found and dearest—
The wreck of kindred love to thee the nearest—
No sigh but tempered with "THY WILL BE DONE,"
Spake, mid the woes with which thy breast was riven,
Aught but the gentlest confidence in heaven;—
And though thy share in sad humanity
Taught thee to feel affliction like a rod,
'Twas lovely in thy deepest misery
To see thee meekly bend and own the hand of God!

ANOTHER.

TO THE SAME.

Though from the fountain of thy bruisëd heart
A silent tear will steal, it leaves no stain
Along the patient cheek: there is no vain
Loud utterance, which oft-times plays a part
In mourning's pomp of woe—without the smart:
And but for that pale face o'er which are thrown
Thy many sorrows darkened into one
Deep thought of what thou wert—and what thou art,—
The world—yea even the few who know thee best—
Might deem thee, if not happy, yet at rest—
So touched by Heaven, that mid thy bosom's blight,
In all thy sweet and sorrowing loveliness,
To all around thee thou art as a light
Shedding abroad the rays of happiness.

LOVE'S LANGUAGE.

DOUBLE SONNET.

I.

Words oft-times, in their pomp of language, do
But clog the incense of the offered heart:
Yea some, like scenic actors, play a part
In showy unreality—some too
Can syllable affection forth as true,
Though but mere semblance; and full oft a token,
Shaped like an honest oath, first made, then broken,
May cheat, and cheat, yet please us till we rue
Our foolish faithful trustiness, and find
Such oath (Jove's laughter) was not made to bind.
I would not garner up this heart of mine
There where, forsooth, lip-love must say "I 'm thine;"
But rather read in sweet affection's book
That silent language of a trusting look.

II.

True love hath wordless language all its own,
Heard in the heart;—and yet there 's eloquence
Beyond their meaning—yea, a thrilling sense
Oft-times in words,—when a kind voice hath grown
(By sweet thoughts fed) into a tremulous tone
Of dear emotion, which may haply seem
To others nothing—and yet shed a gleam
Along an anxious heart—for then alone
That under-breathe'd, affection-touchëd power
Out-thrills a thousand doubts. O, peerless hour—
When, from one word thus uttered falteringly,
Within the heart there springs up suddenly
A feeling far from earthly things removed—
The first young feeling that we are not all *un*-loved.—

HOLY AGE.

SONNET.

How beautiful is virtuous old age,
When every feeling, every thought 's imbued
With what makes all seem heavenlier.—'Tis good,
Good to the soul,—and medicine fit to assuage
The sharpest ills of life, to hear a page
Read from the Book of Books, by one whose still
Assurëd voice turns all to oracle.—
Yes, there 's a virtuous and gracious age,
(Such as full well I know,) whose words we hear
And feel them benisons—whose every prayer,
Poured from a trusting heart, seems to have caught
Its tone from heaven, which hallows it to less
A dubious hope of what 'tis heard to express
Than consummation of the good that 's sought!—

THE LAST HOPE.

SONNET,

(written under a sense of utter misfortune.)

Well, it is past—and I have had my dream
Of happiness, like many another son
Of frail mortality—and now 'tis gone !—
Its joys and splendour were but as a beam
Of the sun's brightness on yon dancing stream,
The which a cloud now shadows into gloom.
But *this* no passing veil :—my earthly doom
Is darkness,—all around the heavens seem
To have clothed their arc, ev'n to the farthest ken
Of *my* horizon, with one sunless cloud—
No ray shall break to cheer this heart again
Through all the woes with which it must be riven—
No hope is left save one—that Mercy's God
May pour his blessed balm to heal its wounds in heaven.

MAN AND THE SEASONS. *

SONNET.

In verdant Spring, the breeze which gently blew
Woke in the heart blithe echoes as it passed—
Young Hope's fond flatteries, whispering all would last;—
But winged with pleasures, fresh, and fair, and new,
And bright, and lovely,—oh, how spring-time flew!
Then, like full manhood bursting from a boy,
Summer shone out,—so rife in flowery joy,
That scarce the bosom owned, what well it knew,
How soon pale Autumn, like a dying friend,
Engendering solemn thoughts of life's decay,
Would come, and withering—withering day by day—
Bring dark December on——and lo, the end!—
Leafless, and fruitless, the year's pride is gone—
And wintry man looks round—and finds himself *alone!*

* This sonnet appears in the Literary Souvenir for the present year.

CONCLUSION.

Farewell !—a word that must be, and hath been—
A sound which makes us linger—yet—farewell !
CHILDE HAROLD.

THE book is closed— and seeing that it is
Wrought out of many contrarieties,
Haply some wise, consistent souls may sneer
And cry—" Why, what a mixture 's lent us here!"
Yet he that wrote it need not be at issue
With them and their opinions,—'tis a tissue
Where bright and dark together seem at strife,
And bears a near resemblance to his life.
Let those objectors pass—each one may have
Unquestioned, his own taste for gay or grave :—
The author's parting word is meant for such
As (when his name creeps out) may marvel much
How one whose common show is mirth and gladness
Hath in his strains so many chords of sadness.

Few know him well—still fewer know him all.
There are who mark in him the boisterous glee
Of a most dominant mirth, which ne'er can fall
Away, while food is left for revelry.

His common friends, the world, take him on trust,
Ev'n as he stands among them—there he 's found
One of a million—something—nothing—just
As custom rules it in her various round.

And they who see him merely as he forms
Part of the social circle, well may deem
His bosom all-unvisited by storms
Which darken round the heart :—they only dream.

For there are feelings none can penetrate,
Lying far deeper than his outward guise—
Thoughts of himself, not others,—that best sate
Themselves in nooks remotest from men's eyes.

And though at times his lonely hours exhibit
Much that sets marks upon his opener mood,
Much that the world sees of his out-door spirit,
None but himself knows all his solitude.

There oft the inly girding of sad thought
Strives to o'ermaster with a curbing sense
His spirit of natural joy, till it is taught
At times to bend before its influence.

Best so, perchance,—else the blithe hours might run
In all-too-smooth a current of heart's glee,
And th' unvexed mind, because it wanted none,
Would make no springing efforts to be free.

'Tis quick vicissitude—'tis want of rest—
'Tis thought expelling thought from which we find
The soul of feeling in its sharpest zest,
And all the elasticity of mind.

Enough of this:—yet ere that word *farewell*
Be spoken, for a brief space let him dwell
On this his heart's unconscious solacer,
His book,—which still hath had the power to cheer
Some vacant moments, making pleasantly
His veriest solitude—society.
Not with its close may such a solace end,
And yet he parts with it as with a friend
That flattered not,—bidding him stand confest

To his own heart—in his own trappings drest,—
Better than worst opinion—worse than best.
It bears his stamp; who cons it o'er will find
Little but takes some colour from his mind;—
Its faults and virtues—great and small—the same—
With something to commend—though much to blame.

Farewell, at length! and if to meet again
Some not far future hour, perchance ere then
He may have taught his harp to pour a loftier strain.

THE END.

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LATELY PUBLISHED,

By the same Author,

CASWALLON,

KING OF BRITAIN;

A TRAGEDY.

Where be the temples which in Britain's isle
For his paternal gods the Trojan raised?
Gone like a morning dream, or like a pile
Of clouds that in cerulean ether blazed!

Wordsworth.

AND

LORENZO,

THE OUTCAST SON;

A TRAGIC DRAMA,

Founded on Schiller's Robbers.

And there are hues not always faded,
Which speak a mind not all degraded
E'en by the crimes through which it waded.

Giaour.

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